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MAZADA TOURS

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Arafat: Peace talks at impasse

JON IMMANUEL
CAIRO

THE peace process blew hot and cold in the Egyptian capital yesterday.

On the one hand, the PLO Executive Committee was due to convene here late last night in special session, as PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat spoke of "an impasse" in the peace process.

On the other hand, the joint Israeli-Palestinian elections committee met in a much improved atmosphere at the Shepherd's Hotel. Delegate Zahir Karmal said "the spirit of the talks is much better. We addressed the same issues." Joel Singer, the Foreign Ministry legal adviser, concurred.

"Impasse" might more aptly apply to situation within the PLO executive committee. Only nine of the 18 members arrived in Cairo by yesterday afternoon. This is less than the two-thirds quorum required to make decisions.

Opposition members from the Popular and Democratic Fronts for the Liberation of Palestine stayed away. Farouk Kaddoumi, the PLO's "foreign minister," and Mahmoud Abbas, architect of the Oslo accords, appeared unlikely to attend, even though the Cairo venue, unlike Gaza, is neutral ground.

Of those who did come, some, like Jamal Sourani, a hard-line Fatah member, have been critical of Arafat's leadership.

Saeed Erekat, head of the Palestinian delegation to the election talks, said he presented six papers at yesterday's session, concerning international observers, agreed supervision, registration of voters, campaign rules, the structure of the council and the nature of the council.

He added that the Palestinians want the observers to take a full role in the elections. "We want them to observe from A to Z, being involved in monitoring voters' lists and the campaign," he said.

He included 20 countries and the UN in his list of potential observers and supervisors.

Behind the scenes, there was a squabble between the two sides concerning the location of yesterday's talks. Israel had asked that they take place in the Geza Sheraton, where the Israeli delegation is housed. The Palestinians pushed for Shepherd's, their hotel, and won.

"[Today] they will be on our home ground," Singer said.

In Cairo, however, the atmosphere is not particularly friendly towards Israel right now. Newspapers are stressing the Egyptian government's differences with Israel over the production of nuclear weapons, recent bombing raids in Lebanon and the difficulties in the Israeli-Palestinian talks.

The Palestinian flag is on display outside Shepherd's. The Israeli flag is not.

"This is not due to any prejudice," said hotel manager Mohammed El-Dib. "The Israeli flag is difficult to get hold of."



Ministers Shimon Shetret (left) and Uzi Baram congratulate one another on their new posts.

Shas makes political science history

COMMENT
SARAH HONIG

THE refrain that punctuated all Meretz's griping yesterday was that Shas - outside the coalition and with only five MKs (following MK Yosef Azran's walkout) - remains considerably more powerful than Meretz, which is part of the government and has 12 MKs.

Indeed, Shas was the big political winner yesterday, even as its erstwhile ministerial properties were being distributed to others. If the latest minor cabinet reshuffle shows anything, it is that Shas continues to make political science history. It continues to exert incredible influence on the coalition to which it no longer belongs, while reliable Meretz is treated with callousness.

The extent of Shas's role in the reshuffle was evidenced by the fact that Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin chose to confer with Shas leader Aryeh Deri before announcing his decision. No matter how that meeting is explained of-

ficially, insiders in both Labor and Shas say it seems as if Rabin sought Shas's approval.

Shas refused to allow Meretz's Yossi Sarid to get the Interior Ministry or Labor's Uzi Baram to receive Religious Affairs. Interior went to Baram only after Rabin received Shas's okay, and that on condition that Baram acknowledge publicly that he is getting it only in a temporary, caretaking capacity.

When Baram coveted the Religious Affairs portfolio, he lashed out against Shas for vetoing him and accused it of "unimaginable butzpa." Yesterday, not a word against Shas could be heard from him. After all, Shas was largely responsible for his good fortune.

From Shas's point of view, Baram was the least of several possible evils. And Shas can just-

ly give the impression that the portfolio is still being held in trust for Deri.

A self-satisfied Deri gripped yesterday and admitted that the choices Rabin made "came as no surprise to me. Rabin chose ministers who would hold the portfolios for safekeeping for a few months only. He chose those ministers from whom it was clear that the portfolios could be taken away most easily. These are ministers who would be no trouble."

Shas, in fact, was given a choice between Transport Minister Yisrael Kessar and Economics Minister Shimon Shetret for the Religious Affairs portfolio. It indicated that it could live with either one. Kessar was not so interested. Shetret, who is considered a maverick with a minuscule portfolio, had to be

mollified before Rabin attempts a more serious cabinet reshuffle later in the year.

Shetret, meanwhile, is a man Shas can trust. Shas made it clear that Shetret is expected not to sack Shas appointees in the Religious Affairs Ministry and not to tamper with Shas's financial arrangements there.

What gives Shas such clout even after it slapped Rabin in the face by refusing to rejoin his coalition? Shas continues to straddle the political fence as no party has ever done before.

If Shas firmly joined the opposition, it could dramatically shorten the minority government's life expectancy. Shas also holds the balance in several key Knesset committees like finance and state control. Acute parliamentary vulnerability compels Rabin to swallow his pride - and even bribe his major coalition partner, Meretz - rather than make any move which might irk Shas.

Frenkel cuts interest by 0.7%

JOSE ROSENFELD
and EVELYN GORDON

BANK of Israel Governor Jacob Frenkel yesterday announced a 0.7 percent cut in interest rates, following strong pressure from the Treasury and the private sector.

"After a long period of rate rises that were intended to fight determinedly against inflation, the Bank of Israel's policy of monetary restraint has begun to bear fruit," said Frenkel. It is the first reduction in rates since August, 1993.

Despite the move, the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange Two-Sided Index fell about 1%, closing at 157.29. Reacting to the announcement, First International Bank said it will reduce as of tomorrow its prime lending rate by 0.7% to 17.8%. Other banks are expected

(Continued on Page 2)

(Continued on Page 2)

'German paper duped, Arad video not new'

BATSHEVA TSUR and ALON PINKAS

RON Arad's family did indeed receive a videocassette and a letter recently - but they were copies of the original video and letter sent to them several years ago that indicated the missing navigator was alive, an informed source said last night.

The Iranians thus succeeded in duping the German newspaper, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, the source said. The paper reported yesterday that there had been new signs of life from Arad in the form of a letter and video to his wife, and that the German State Secretary Berndt Schmidthaner is mediating between Israel and Iran for his release.

Arad was shot down over Lebanon in October 1986 and was spotted parachuting into an Amal-Shi'ite area.

Almost every Israeli official asked about the matter yesterday denied that Israel received any new signs of life from Arad, but German government officials confirmed that talks were held in Bonn.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin described as "baseless" the revelations on negotiations between Israel and Iran.

"I know of German inquiries with the Iranians on Arad's fate and whereabouts, but they have resulted in nothing," Rabin said yesterday. "No negotiations are currently being held between Israel and Iran. We consider him alive and we hold the Iranians responsible for his fate."

Foreign Minister Shimon Peres criticized the newspaper report yesterday as being harmful.

In Bonn, meanwhile, Government spokesman Dieter Vogel confirmed that Germany held talks with Iran on the issue, but refused to add any details. David Makovsky contributed to this report.

Unlicensed Clalit dental clinics operate for profit

JUDY SIEGEL

KUPAT Holim Clalit's 55 dental clinics have been operating on a commercial - rather than a non-profit - basis and without a Health Ministry license since January 1, *The Jerusalem Post* has learned.

Dr. Moshe Kelman, head of the ministry's dental health department, yesterday charged that Clalit "deceived" the public by keeping the change quiet. He warned that dentists in commercial clinics who get "premiums" instead of regular salaries may work too fast, avoid giving patients time-consuming advice, and be motivated by financial considerations to provide unnecessary treatment.

Kelman also wrote to Education Ministry legal adviser Aryeh Brick, calling on the ministry to cancel its insurance contract with Clalit for any damage to schoolchildren's teeth sustained in any accidents on school property.

"Now that Clalit's dental clinics are being run on a commercial basis,

we cannot be sure that they will treat patients according to strictly professional criteria," Kelman told *The Post*.

Doris Morag of the Education Ministry's legal department said she was not aware of the change in the clinics, but that the original tender won by Clalit to provide this service intentionally excluded commercial dental clinics.

Dental treatment is not included in the basket of services under the new National Health Insurance Law, which went into effect January 1. Although the Maccabi, Meuhedet, and Leumi health funds continue to run their dental clinics on a non-profit basis - albeit with dentists paid premiums instead of salaries - Clalit turned its network into a commercial chain of clinics without any fanfare or advertising, and without telling the ministry in advance.

Kelman said that according to law, any change in the name or

(Continued on Page 2)

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Peres to meet with Mubarak about NPT

DAVID MAKOVSKY and MARILYN HENRY

FOREIGN Minister Shimon Peres will fly tomorrow to Cairo, where he will hold one-day talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in a bid to resolve tensions surrounding the April extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Foreign Ministry officials say.

It appears that it is not coincidental that the talks are occurring between Peres and Mubarak, and not between Peres and his Egyptian counterpart Amr Moussa. There is every reason to think that Peres would prefer to deal only with Mu-

barak on this issue instead of a student Moussa.

Israeli officials are privately furious at Moussa's nasty tone in dealing with Israel. Last week at a White House summit, Israeli officials say they were taken aback when Moussa began shouting at Peres. Speaking in the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin charged that there

was an "ill wind" coming from the Egyptian Foreign Ministry.

Subsequently, Mubarak publicly defended Moussa, saying the Egyptian Foreign Ministry does not have an independent foreign policy.

In New York, UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali abruptly declined to enter the fray between Egypt and Israel over the NPT, saying the arms pact was a matter for the states, not the UN.

At a news conference yesterday inaugurating the UN Year for Tolerance, the secretary-general was asked about tensions between Cairo and Jerusalem related to Israel's refusal to sign the NPT.

"I hope that the two parties will find a solution" in negotiations, Boutros-Ghali said.

This is not a matter for the UN, he said sharply, when pressed. "All member states are free [to sign] the

NPT or not."

The treaty, which went into effect in 1970, comes up for renewal at a month-long UN conference beginning in April. The United States is leading the drive for an indefinite extension of the NPT, although it appears to be some 20 votes short of the number needed for its position.

Egypt has conditioned its support for the extension on Israel's signing the treaty. A number of Arab states have indicated that they will join Cairo's refusal to back the extension in the absence of Israeli action.

'Egypt using NPT dispute to slow normalization'

ALON PINKAS

BY pressing the nuclear issue, Egypt is trying to slow the normalization process between Israel and the Arab world, Ha'aretz's military analyst Ze'ev Schiff said yesterday.

Speaking at a seminar on the nuclear issue and the peace process, held at the Israel Galilee Institute at Yad Tabenkin, Schiff said: "Israel has been sucked into Arab politics and is forging ties with Morocco, Oman and other countries. Egypt is fearful that its hegemony is threatened, so it overburdens the peace process with the nuclear issue."

In addition, he asserted, Egypt aspires to nullify Israel's advantage in qualitative weapons systems.

The seminar, meant to deal with implications of global and regional changes on Israel's national security and nuclear deterrence, was mostly devoted to the current Israeli-Egyptian tensions regarding Israel's reluctance to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, up for renewal in April.

Prof. Avner Cohen, an MIT re-

searcher specializing in Israel's nuclear doctrine, proposed that the countries in the region learn from the experience of Latin America, which concluded an agreement on a regional nuclear-free zone on the continent.

Cohen, who in the past was severely criticized here for attempting to introduce the nuclear issue into public discourse, stressed that even if Israel cannot allow itself to sign the NPT, which it shouldn't, it must engage in a constructive dialogue with Egypt on the issue.

"The NPT is part of a normative world order, which, even if it lacks coercive powers and is flawed, is superior to complete anarchy," Cohen said.

"The NPT benefits Israel, despite the fact that it cannot sign it as a non-nuclear state. Offering the Egyptians to inspect the Nahal Sorek nuclear facility is insulting, because it is already subject to inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency," he said.

PA puts out booklet on Jewish immigration to Palestine

LIAT COLLINS

THE Palestinian Authority's Information Ministry has published a booklet entitled "Jewish Immigration to Palestine and its Devastating Effects on the Peace Process."

The existence of the seven-page English-language booklet was exposed by Likud MK Benny Begin at yesterday's Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee meeting.

"It is a direct assault on the very existence of the Land of Israel and repeats many of the old claims such as a plan by which 'the original inhabitants will be uprooted from their land and replaced by new immigrants,'" Begin told *The Jerusalem Post*.

"This publication is in full accordance with the PLO's refusal to abolish its covenant, which openly calls for the destruction of the State of Israel, and is also in line with Arafat's announcements since Oslo that he's committed to the 1974 PLO Phased Strategy Plan which also ultimately calls for the destruction of Israel."

The booklet uses the word "alarming" to describe the increase in Jewish immigration, and gives Jewish population figures according to native born and foreign born.

The pamphlet accuses the government of taking measures to force Jewish immigrants to settle in Israel rather than other countries. Its main theme is that immigration "cannot be accomplished without the confiscation of more Palestinian land."

It says Israel continues "the Zionist expansionist goals via the confiscation of a massive number of Arab land in a move to evict Palestinian land owners from the territories in preparation for the absorption of more immigrants."

It also claims Israel has expropriated natural resources belonging to Palestinians.

Fundamentalists block Amman bill to normalize relations

AMMAN (AP) — Moslem fundamentalist lawmakers claimed a minor victory yesterday after a bill to scrap anti-Israel laws failed to draw a quorum in the national assembly.

The bill, presented to comply with October's peace treaty, calls for the repeal of three statutes banning the sale of land to Israelis and all trade and other dealings.

But the government was caught off-guard when a legal minimum of 3% of the 80-member Chamber of Deputies was absent for yesterday's session.

The 16 members of the Islamic Action Front, political arm of the Jordanian branch of the Moslem Brotherhood movement which vehemently opposes the peace treaty, and five leftist and pan-Arab nationalists who support them boycotted the session.

But fewer than 45 of the other lawmakers turned up, mainly because of the holy fasting month of Ramadan.

Hamza Mansour, the Islamic bloc's spokesman, likened the bill to laws that allowed Zionist immigrants to purchase land in pre-1948 Palestine and consolidate their claim on the Holy Land.

"It will expose Jordanian land to the Zionist enemy," he said. Eventual passage is seen as certain because the pro-government block in the assembly holds a comfortable majority of 55 seats.

SOCIAL & PERSONAL

The weekly meeting of the English-speaking Jerusalem Rotary Club will take place today at 1 p.m. at the YMCA, King David Street. The Mexican ambassador, the Honorable I.L.C. Rafael Rodriguez Barrera, will address the club.



A resident of Sur Bahir shows what is left of his olive orchard, which was uprooted by bulldozers yesterday making way for new housing below the capital's Armon Hanatziv neighborhood. (Khaled Zighan)

'Gazan activists marketing staged intifada'

GAZAN activists are offering to organize "staged intifada" demonstrations of 30 to 40 children for foreign journalists — for only NIS 3 per child, according to a reporter for the Turkish newspaper *Hurriyet*.

Correspondent Sabati Karakun, who recently returned from Gaza, said two men showed him the business cards of foreign journalists who had previously used

their services and proposed to create a series of demonstrations and performances. In addition to rock-throwing children, they offered the Turkish journalist a demonstration of uniformed men for \$300.

They also offered to set up an interview with Hamas or Islamic Jihad members, who would stand in a darkened place and discuss their activities.

In Gaza yesterday, a roadside bomb was detonated near a Palestinian police jeep on a joint patrol with IDF soldiers near Netzarim, causing damage to the vehicle but no injuries, the IDF said.

In Jerusalem, border policemen were attacked by a group of stone-throwing youths near Jaffa Gate yesterday. One youth was injured when the policemen fired rubber bullets to disperse the

stone-throwers.

Also in the Old City, an Arab youth tried to stab a border policeman near the house of MK Ariel Sharon. The youth was overpowered by several officers and arrested. Police said the youth was apparently disturbed.

Near Ramallah, a soldier was injured by broken glass when the car he was traveling in was hit by stones. (Jerusalem Post Staff)

FRENKEL

(Continued from Page 1)

to follow suit by the end of the week.

Frenkel pointed to lower inflationary expectations in the capital market and slower growth in the money supply. He justified the moderate rate cut on the fact that "the [government's] inflation target is not yet at hand." Despite the reduction, the central bank will continue its restrictive monetary policy, Frenkel said.

He denied that the rate cut reflected a compromise between the central bank's desire for a smaller reduction and the demands by the Treasury and the private sector for more significant cuts.

The news of the rate cut brought a sigh of relief at the Treasury. In a statement, the Treasury expressed its satisfaction at the central bank's move. "This is a right step in the right direction, whose importance derives from the fact that the monetary program will be consistent with [the government's] fiscal policy," the statement said.

The Treasury, however, did not hide its desire to see further interest rate cuts saying "the move reflects the beginning of the process of reducing interest rates which is essential to the economy's stability and its growth."

The Treasury urgently sought the rate cut to help diffuse the crisis in the bond market that has been fanned by the massive flight of provident fund savers to bank savings programs, pushing down bond prices, as the provident funds' demand for new bonds has fallen dramatically.

DENTAL

(Continued from Page 1)

nature of a dental clinic requires reapplication for a license before it takes effect. Only at the end of January did Uzi Halperin, manager of Clalit's clinics, write to the ministry and say they were undergoing reorganization. "I learned of the changes only from the chain's new letterhead: *Sherutim Livrit Hashen* (Shela) Ltd. [Services for Healthy Teeth]. But patients have the right to know about this change," Kelman said.

The ministry official said it is likely Shela would eventually be granted a license if it met the official criteria for recognized commercial clinics, including the availability of resuscitation equipment, a senior dentist in charge and the keeping of proper records. But for the time be-

ing, none of the clinics has a license, and according to law none of its 350 dentists is allowed to work there, he said.

Clalit spokesman David Tager said in response that the lack of a license is "only a technical problem," and that all the arrangements will be made within a short time. He said that Kelman's claim of potentially non-professional practices among dentists living off a percentage of the clinics' turnover was "demagogic."

"We have strict medical supervision, and our dentists do not do unnecessary dental treatments on patients to make more money," Tager said. "We merely reorganized the system to make it more efficient and give dentists more motivation."

Our dearest husband and father Rabbi MYER (Sonny) BENJAMIN

formerly of Temple Israel, Wynberg, Cape Town passed away after an illness on February 21, 1995. The funeral will take place today, February 22, at 2 p.m. at the Ashdod Cemetery, leaving from 68/44 Kinneret St., Yod Aler, Ashdod at 1:30 p.m.

Nina, David, Jonathan, Debbie and Marcelo Shiva at above address.

We deeply mourn the passing of our beloved

BRINA GINN

Heartfelt condolences to Sonja and family, and Gershon.

Rogow and Kalmanowitz Families
Jerusalem and Cape Town

In deep sorrow, we mourn the passing of our dear cousin

WALLY HAMMERSCHLAG

Wally and Esther Katz and Family
Tillie Katz and Family

We deeply mourn the passing of
our very dear friend

WALLY HAMMERSCHLAG

Marsha and Teddy Edelstein and Family
Fay and Kalley Saacks

WALLY HAMMERSCHLAG

Our dearly beloved Wally passed away
on February 20.

Deeply mourned and never to be forgotten
by her heartbroken family.

We love her so much.

The funeral will take place at Ra'anana Cemetery.
For details, phone 09-550149, 09-454219.

Husband, Lutz

Son, Robert, and wife, Marcy

Daughter, Shirley

Son, Mark, and wife, Lynne

Son, Lennard

Sister, Hannah, and brother-in-law, Meyer

Hodes

Grandchildren, Lauren, Neal, Gabrielle, Steven

Hizbullah keeps up attacks

MARIJAYOUN (Reuters) — Hizbullah guerrillas attacked South Lebanese Army posts yesterday in a third day of fighting in south Lebanon, SLA sources said.

They said a SLA soldier was wounded when Hizbullah shelled three SLA outposts near the southern town of Jezzine, and then attacked one of the posts with anti-tank grenades and machine gun fire.

Lebanese security sources said Israeli gunners responded by pounding Hizbullah areas near the villages of Maydom and Berket Jabour north of the zone, on the western edge of the Bekaa valley.

Three killed in road accidents

THREE people were killed and four people injured, one seriously, in road accidents yesterday. A victim of a Monday road accident died of her injuries.

A pedestrian, Nahum Shoshensky, 65, of Petah Tikva, was killed when he was hit by a truck at the Kfar Sirkin junction. The truck driver was arrested and released on bail.

A 40-year-old woman was killed by a car while crossing the street at the Hatzer Giliit intersection. The driver was arrested.

Soldier Yitzhak Sror, 19, of Bat Yam, was killed when his motorcycle was hit by a car in Kiryat Ono. Police believe the driver of the car ignored a stop sign.

Esther Amar, 56, of Holon, who was hit by a motorcycle in

that city Monday, died of her injuries in Sheba Hospital at Tel Hashomer. The two motorcycle riders were still reported in serious condition at Sheba.

Four people were injured, one seriously, when two cars collided near the train tracks near Nahal Sorek. The injured were taken to Kaplan Hospital in Rehovot.

Also yesterday, the body of a windsurfer was found off the Shavei Zion Beach by a navy vessel. It is presumed to be the body of Uri Koreish, 37, of Haifa, who has been missing since January 6.

In another accident, a 20-year-old from Kiryat Ono suffered moderate to serious injuries when his hang glider crashed into cliffs on the coast near Rishon LeZion.

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Fraud squad investigates Histadrut

BILL HUTMAN

THE National Police Fraud Squad is investigating alleged financial wrongdoings by the Histadrut, a police spokesman confirmed yesterday.

Detectives last week raided the Histadrut finance department and removed documents connected with the case. Four department officials were also interrogated.

Likud MK Ya'acov Shamai, who lost last year's Histadrut election, prompted the investigation with a complaint to the police. Police made initial inquiries, which showed that a full-fledged investigation was warranted.

Shamai said a thorough investigation by police will show criminal

wrongdoing on both the political and official levels of the Histadrut. "For more than a decade no check was done of the activities of the finance department," Shamai told the Post.

Former finance department head Anshur Yisraelovitch was also questioned by Fraud Squad detectives, Histadrut officials said.

Histadrut treasurer Haim Oron, of the Ram faction, said in a statement yesterday that the police investigation "concerned an incident that occurred in the months preceding the Histadrut elections in which Histadrut funds were allegedly used for

non-Histadrut activities."

He said he had instructed all finance department workers to cooperate with investigators. Oron confirmed that last week police had taken documents, and that several officials were questioned. But he denied Shamai's allegations against the present leadership.

Shamai alleged "secret funds" were channeled to ruling parties in the Histadrut for years, and the present leadership was trying to put blame solely on former Histadrut leader Haim Haberfeld.

He said his complaint to police

included details of NIS 16 million being transferred to Labor Party Histadrut election campaign coffers just days before the May Histadrut election.

The Likud Party received a NIS 2.25 million loan for the campaign from the Treasury, which was recorded as a NIS 1.5 million loan, according to Shamai.

"We are talking about things that may sound like history. But the criminals are still around," Shamai said.

Police sources said Shamai's complaint was made after he lost the election. Shamai, however, said before the election he went to police with the complaint.

High Court rejects injunction against police in wiretapping case

EVELYN GORDON

THE High Court of Justice yesterday refused to issue an interim injunction against police methods of investigating a suspected illegal wiretapper, because the suspect had refused to cooperate with police efforts to minimize the damage.

The petitioner, private investigator David Schneider, is suspected of illegally videotaping a couple in a Herzliya Pinah hotel room. During the investigation, the police found his list of clients and the people they had asked him to tail, and began calling both clients and subjects in for questioning. Schneider charged that this was a clear invasion of privacy, and in some cases - when the police informed a woman that

her husband had had her tailed - was even breaking up marriages.

However, government attorney Shai Nitzan told the court that the police had seized several other videotapes from Schneider which appeared to have been made illegally, and Schneider had refused to identify the people in the videos. Therefore, he said, the police had no alternative but to try to match the videos with the names on the list.

In most of the cases so far where the correct people were located, Nitzan added, the subjects wanted to

file a complaint against Schneider. Justice Elihu Mazza ruled that given Schneider's refusal to cooperate, the police had no choice but to continue as they were doing. Any other decision, he said, would be tantamount to granting illegal wiretappers immunity.

In a related matter, the Knesset Law Committee decided yesterday that the attorney-general will be able to approve wiretaps in police investigations only for serious felonies - those that bear sentences of seven years or more - except in special cases. The Justice Ministry had wanted the attorney-general to be able to approve wiretaps in any felony case.

Max Fisher bids to hold Agency assembly in Kiev

BATSHEVA TSUR

AMERICAN Zionist leader Max Fisher is expected to ask for a vote today on a proposal to hold the annual Jewish Agency Assembly this June in Kiev. He will request the vote when the Agency Board of Governors convenes to confirm the nomination of MK Avraham Burg as acting chairman.

The assembly is traditionally held in Jerusalem.

Yehiel Leket, who has been acting chairman for the past year, said he believes that holding the assembly in Kiev would put across the wrong message to the public. What the agency needs now is to cut costs, he said, and the Kiev visit - which would cost a reported \$500,000 - would create an image of simply wasting money.

Holding the assembly in Jerusalem would spare the cost of having to fly and put up Israeli participants.

Burg is to be named today to head the World Zionist Organization - of which he is not even a member. In the afternoon, the board will convene in a plenary session at the Jerusalem International Convention Center, and is expected to confirm his election as acting chairman of the agency. He will retain this title until the assembly votes for a permanent chairman in June.

Burg refused to comment on the matter of the assembly's location last night, saying he did not want to do so until formally elected. "I shall express my opinion tomorrow," he said.

"Fisher will bring up the decision for a vote, but there is general consensus about going to Kiev," a source close to board chairman Mendel Kaplan said yesterday.

The half-million dollar cost would include bringing 500 to 600 participants to Kiev, putting them up in hotels and organizing the program. The agency is expected to pay half the cost from its regular budget, with the remainder coming from the participants and a special fund.

Geula Cohen threatens to sue Amos Oz for libel

HERB KEINON

FORMER Tehiya MK Geula Cohen sent a letter to author Amos Oz yesterday demanding an apology for writing that she has an "appetite for vengeance," and threatening legal action if the apology is not forthcoming.

In an op-ed piece last week in *Yedioth Aharonot* dealing with the Kiryat Arba memorial service for Baruch Goldstein, Oz wrote, "One fiery woman from Kiryat Arba, a former Knesset member, understands well the appetite for vengeance and is partner to it, and she has no problem, moral or otherwise,

with the fact that the vengeance manifests itself in the murder of innocents."

Cohen was never mentioned in the piece by name, but is the only female former MK living in Kiryat Arba.

Cohen's lawyer, Haim Misgav, sent a letter to Oz saying these words are malicious lies and constitute slander. He wrote that Oz's characterization was "cruel, without foundation, and intended to hu-

milate my client in the eyes of the public, and make her the object of hate, scorn and contempt."

Misgav said Cohen would take the matter to the courts if Oz does not publish an apology and contribute an agreed sum of money to an agreed upon charity.

Cohen, explaining why she wanted to take the matter to court, said: "He slandered me. It is time to bring him down from off his precipice. He is constantly denouncing and attacking the settlers."

Amos Oz said he will "respond to the matter in my own time."

50-year-old held for rape of 11-year-old, now pregnant

RAINE MARCUS

SHARON police have arrested a 50-year-old man who allegedly raped an 11-year-old girl seven months ago.

The case surfaced two weeks ago when the girl's teacher noticed she was pregnant. The girl, an immi-

grant from Ethiopia, had not told anyone she was pregnant, and her family apparently did not notice the pregnancy.

The girl's teacher took her to a

social worker, whom the 11-year-old told she had been raped.

Police immediately launched an investigation and during the past week arrested three suspects. Two were released after it became apparent that they were not involved.

Beersheba buses will stop for two hours of protest tomorrow

AMIR ROZENBLIT

BUS service within Beersheba will be suspended from 8 to 10 tomorrow morning, when Beersheba Municipal Transport Company workers hold a protest gathering against the privatization of the company.

At the meeting, the company's 300 workers are to decide on a series of steps to foil plans by Mayor Yitzhak Reger and the

company's board of directors to sell 49 percent of the company to business interests or to other concerns.

The workers believe the privatization will lead to firings.

Ongoing contacts between the sides on the sale of the company have not resulted in any conces-

sions by management on the privatization plans. At a meeting Monday, Reger said the city would have to sell the company at any price because of government pressure.

The workers plan to meet this week with the Finance, Transport and Interior ministers to persuade them to cancel the decision to sell the company.



A rescue worker demonstrates extricating people from dangerous situations at the safety exhibition that opened yesterday at the Tel Aviv Fairgrounds. (Michael Freidlin)

Ma'aleh Ephraim official quits after police open investigation

BILL HUTMAN

THE treasurer of Ma'aleh Ephraim has resigned after police opened a preliminary investigation into alleged financial wrongdoing by the Jordan Valley settlement's local council.

Council head Haim Aviv, who is also suspected of wrongdoing, said that Treasurer Merom Maskovitz gave him a letter of resignation on Monday.

"He stepped down for personal reasons," Aviv said. Maskovitz could not be reached for comment.

The National Fraud Squad opened a preliminary investigation

recently into allegations Aviv and Maskovitz set up fictitious companies into which they funneled council money, according to police sources.

A decision would be made soon whether the allegations warranted opening a formal investigation.

"I don't know anything about a police investigation," Aviv said. "If the police want to check things here, they are welcome," he added.

Aviv said reports that he too resigned or planned to resign were unfounded. "I am continuing to work," he said.

TV disclosure leads to arrest

RAINE MARCUS

A 21-year-old male prostitute, who was arrested for drug use following his appearance on a Channel 2 documentary film, was remanded yesterday for four days by the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court.

On February 9, Yair Degani was filmed stealing a bus and smoking drugs on the program, which described his life as a male prostitute in Tel Aviv.

The day after the program, Degani allegedly stole a vehicle that was involved in an accident in Netanya. Degani, who does not have a driver's license, gave police false details and returned to Tel Aviv.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rabin: Reservists cost economy

Pulling people off the job to do reserve duty costs the economy 30 percent more than what the National Insurance Institute pays out to cover salaries, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin told the Knesset yesterday. Responding to a query from Likud MK Ron Natan, Rabin confirmed that it is far less expensive to maintain regular soldiers than reserve soldiers, but that regular soldiers cannot replace reservists in all situations. He said the NII had paid NIS 816 million to maintain reservists in 1993.

Rabin said no decision had been made regarding the shortening of compulsory military service, which is being weighed against the desire also to lessen the reserve duty burden.

Work accidents on the rise

Some 90,000 work accidents occurred in the country last year, 4,000 more than in 1993, it was announced yesterday. Labor and Social Affairs Minister Ora Namir said her ministry would focus efforts this year on work safety, especially in the building sector where the most serious work accidents occurred last year. The best way to reduce accidents in that sector, she said, is through joint efforts between the ministry and the Contractors Association.

Honored for preventing suicide

A TEL AVIV teacher who noticed that one of her pupils had become severely depressed following a family crisis was awarded a prize yesterday for preventing the teenager from committing suicide. The teacher spent weeks befriending the girl, and would go to her home late at night when necessary to help her cope. After receiving a tip-off from another pupil, the teacher arrived at the scene of the attempted suicide, together with other professionals. The girl is now receiving psychological help and has returned to her regular school routine.

Stiff fines given for littering

Three people were fined from NIS 200 to NIS 750 by various magistrate's courts recently for the throwing of garbage out of car windows, in violation of anti-littering regulations.

The cases were brought to court by the Environment Ministry, based on reports by members of the ministry's volunteer "Clean Patrol."

Michel Azouli was fined NIS 750 shekels by the Haifa Magistrate's Court for throwing a cigarette butt out of his car window in Haifa. Dani Mizrahi was fined NIS 250 shekels by the Tel Aviv Magistrate's Court for allowing his passenger to throw a butt out of his car onto the Tel Aviv-Haifa road. Eran Eshed was fined NIS 200 for throwing nut shells out of his car window at the Geha interchange.

Woman to have transplant in US

A Kiryat Shmona resident, Esther Atlas, 35, will fly to the United States today for a liver transplant. The cost of the operation, estimated at \$250,000, will be funded by Kupat Holim Clalit and the Dekla insurance company.

Kiryat Shmona Mayor Prosper Azran had asked Health Minister Ephraim Sneh to assist in the matter. City residents collected funds to finance travel costs.

'Sh'hur' noted at Berlin festival

The Israeli movie *Sh'hur* received an honorary mention Monday night at the closing ceremonies of the Berlin Film Festival, disappointing producer Yoram Kishlev and other Israeli film industry members.

Sh'hur, well received by the critics, was the Israeli entry for the Golden Bear competition which was awarded to the French movie *L'appart*. The Silver Bear went to the American movie *Smoke*, and best directing was awarded to the Austrian-American co-production *Before Sunrise*. Mimi Halberstam

EYE ON THE MEDIA

DAVID BAR-ILLAN

Media reporting on Israel is not only relentlessly unfair but immensely harmful to Israel and to democratic values. The *Jerusalem Post's* popular and hard-hitting *Eye on the Media* column cites specific media reports and names to expose the bias, distortions and gross factual errors that plague such coverage. Reprinted here are 97 recent columns on the way the American, European - and Israeli - media report events. *Eye on the Media* is an eye opener, essential reading for everyone who cares about Israel, truth and journalistic ethics.

David Bar-Illan's column is outstanding. He is 100% right. Teddy Kollek (Davar, August 21, 1992)

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Goodwill galore as woman reaches 120

ARLES (AP) - The photographers jostled as though Madonna were in the room, but they were taking aim at Jeanne Calment, unruffled by all the hoopla as she turned 120 yesterday - the oldest person in the world.

"Why all the applause?" asked Mrs. Calment, hard of hearing but still able to detect the rousing ovation from several hundred guests at her nursing home.

There were children in folk costumes singing "Happy Birthday," thousands of cards from around the world, an enormous chocolate cake, a brief speech by the health minister, who gave her a cicada-shaped brooch.

The birthday girl took it all calmly, watching from her wheel chair in a new black-and-white outfit and new hair-do. Bouquets of roses covered the carpet in front of her.

Nearly blind, Mrs. Calment has been living since 1985 at a nursing home that has been renamed after her. She has used a wheel chair since fracturing her leg and elbow in a fall in 1990.

The Guinness Book of Records lists her as the oldest person in the world whose age can be authenticated. In seven months, 22 days, she would surpass Shigechiyo Izumi - a Japanese man who died in 1986 - as the oldest person of all time with a verifiable birth date.

Mrs. Calment has been the oldest person since 1991 with the death of a 116-year-old American, Carry White.

Mrs. Calment still lives in the southern city of Arles, where she was born at 7 a.m. in 1875. She has outlived her husband, brother, daughter and grandson, so she has no direct descendants.

But she has memories - traveling to Paris when the Eiffel Tower was still under construction, selling colored pencils to Vincent Van Gogh in Arles.



Two Russians dig a grave in a Grozny park which has been converted into a graveyard. Bodies are being buried in the park because there is no nearby Russian Orthodox graveyard, and the nearest one is too dangerous to reach following the end of the cease-fire. (AP)

Chechnyan peace hopes dim

GROZNY (AP) - Shell-shocked inhabitants of Grozny gathered what was left of their belongings in the demolished Chechen capital yesterday as the boom of heavy artillery dimmed hopes for peace anytime soon.

Small-arms fire crackled toward the south of the city where Chechen fighters still hold out around the district of Chernomozhny. Heavy explosions could be heard every minute during the day yesterday, two days after the expiration of a shaky truce.

But Russian soldiers riding on top of armored personnel carriers in the city, throwing up dust in the hard February sun, showed little fear of snipers' bullets.

Elderly women, ragged-looking couples and children picked their way through the rubble-strewn streets with prams and bicycles laden with possessions past the gutted presidential palace.

"I came back to collect these towels and some other things," said 42-year-old Damani Kavi-

mov, who had walked 35 km. to fetch three bags of belongings from her burned-out home.

Olga Zibova, who fled the fighting on Dec. 31, stood in front of the flattened pharmacy where she had worked.

Her 19-year-old son had been killed in the Russian onslaught on the capital New Year's Eve. "I only found out a few days ago," she said, displaying little emotion. "I was living in a cellar on the other side of a cellar where he was staying."

Russian army and Interior Ministry troops around the central square watched the bedraggled civilians with only token interest.

After the fragile cease-fire expired Sunday night, officials in neighboring Ingushetia said Monday they would try to restart peace talks.

Boris Agapov, vice president of neighboring Ingushetia, said he spoke to both sides Monday in hopes of scheduling another ne-

gotiating session.

But Pyotr Kosov, an advisor to the Ingush government, said contacts between Russian and Chechen officials were "much more unstable" than before because politicians were torpedoing the talks, the Interfax news agency reported.

Chechen leader Dzhokhar Dudayev said talks among military commanders, rather than presidents, would never succeed and predicted the war would "last for another 50 years."

In Moscow, Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev said no peace can come from negotiations with Chechen rebels, declaring that Moscow will only settle for their surrender.

Visiting an armor testing range outside Moscow, Grachev said Chechen military commanders "are willing to talk about a cease-fire. But our talks with them are short - no cease-fire whatsoever, just an ultimatum about surrendering the weapons."

It was unclear if Grachev was speaking for the government. He was one of the main figures in planning the Chechnya operation but his current role in decisions involving the war is less certain.

He has been widely blamed for the disastrous New Year's Eve assault on the Chechen capital Grozny in which Russian tanks became easy targets for grenades and Molotov cocktails.

Russia's Independent TV said Russian forces in Grozny were bracing for major attacks tomorrow. That day marks the 51st anniversary of the cruel deportation of ethnic Chechens by Josef Stalin, who accused them of collaborating with the Nazis.

At the Russian parliament, a committee formed earlier this year held its first open hearings on the Chechen conflict. It heard testimony from an odd assembly of noted hard-liners and liberals, who attacked Yeltsin and his government for varying reasons.

US, Mexico agree on rescue package

WASHINGTON (AP) - After five intense days of negotiations, the United States and Mexico have agreed on terms for a \$20 billion rescue package for the Mexican economy, officials said yesterday.

The agreement met US demands that Mexico make fundamental reforms of its economy - reforms that may cause economic pain in the form of rising interest rates and possibly a recession.

However, US officials said without the reforms, investor confidence cannot be restored and the value of the Mexican peso will continue to plummet.

The Mexican stock market, the Bolsa de Valores, was down by nearly 1 percent in early trading, because traders appeared to be waiting for details of the plan and because of higher interest rates announced Monday. The peso was stronger, at 5.4 to the dollar, from a Monday close of 5.55.

Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin and Mexican Finance Minister Guillermo were due to sign the agreement in Treasury's ornate Cash Room last night and officials said exact details of the terms would be spelled out then.

However, in advance of the ceremony, an administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said, "All of our concerns were taken care of."

Presidential press secretary Mike McCurry said, "We are satisfied that the government of Mexico and the United States have made excellent progress in the discussions over the weekend."

The announcement that an agreement had been reached came one day after Mexico's central bank announced that it was tightening credit in a move that pushed short-term interest rates in the country up to almost 50 percent.

Officials of the Bank of Mexico said their action was taken as a result of the negotiations with the United States.

One key US demand has been for Mexican authorities to tighten monetary policy as a way of supporting the peso by pushing interest rates higher.

Ortiz arrived in Washington last week for discussions with Rubin.

"The United States and Mexican officials have been making progress toward finalizing the economic support package," presidential press secretary Mike McCurry said Monday, the fifth day of the discussions.

President Clinton last month offered Mexico the \$20b. in US loans after a bigger \$40b. loan guarantee package ran into stiff congressional opposition.

The \$20b. in loans are being obtained through a Treasury fund normally used to support the dollar. While congressional critics have charged Clinton with overstepping his authority to tap into this fund, an effort to challenge the president was defeated by the full House two weeks ago.

However, in an effort to reassure skeptical lawmakers, the administration will insist on stringent terms to the US assistance.

British, Irish leaders to publish 'framework' plan for N. Ireland

LONDON (AP) - Agreed at last on a vision for the future of Northern Ireland, British and Irish leaders embark today on the next difficult stage of the peace process - persuading the parties to talk.

"The objective that I have... is to ensure that what has been thus far a cease-fire is able to be turned into a permanent peace," Prime Minister John Major told the House of Commons yesterday.

The long-awaited "framework" that Major and Irish Prime Minister John Bruton plan to release today in Belfast will fall short of all parties' aspirations.

The intention is to accommodate the conflicting aspirations of British-ruled Northern Ireland's Protestant, pro-British majority and a Catholic minority that wants to end British rule - the ancient grudge that sustained a quarter-century of violence.

The IRA began a cease-fire on Sept. 1, and pro-British "loyalists" from the Protestant side followed suit in mid-October.

Both governments have already promised Protestants that any agreements will be subject to a referendum within Northern Ireland, and that they may remain in the United Kingdom so long as a

majority of its people wish. The framework is widely expected to include an Irish pledge to amend the republic's constitutional claim to Northern Ireland's territory.

For Catholics, the framework is likely to include proposals for new bodies to deal with some issues, such as agriculture and tourism, on an all-Ireland basis. Unionists have denounced such ideas as a halfway house to Irish unity.

James Moynihan, leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, dismissed the framework proposal in advance but left the door open for negotiations. The Rev. Ian Paisley, leader of the hard-line Democratic Unionist Party, predicted the document will be "a total and absolute surrender to the (Irish) nationalist agenda."

Sinn Fein, the party that supports the IRA, has said little about leaked drafts of the document, nor has the Social Democratic and Labour Party, the largest party on the Catholic side.

The framework is an attempt to reconcile the conflicting aspirations of a Catholic minority that favors union with the Irish republic, and a Protestant majority that is determined to keep Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom.

Serbs reject peace plan

BELGRADE (Reuters) - Serbia has lobbed a new peace proposal back at the Big Powers, saying it will consider their plan only if sanctions are lifted.

Another new worry was piled onto peacebrokers on Monday with an announcement by rebel Bosnian and Croatian Serb leader that they had formed a joint military council as a threat loomed of renewed war in Croatia.

The peace plan put forward by Britain, Germany, France, Russian and the United States offered to ease sanctions on Belgrade, imposed in 1992 because of its support for the rebel Serbs, if it recognized Bosnia and Croatia.

Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, charged with selling the plan to Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, went home after a weekend of talks with the response that an end to sanctions

was a precondition for Belgrade's cooperation, official media said on Monday.

"Belgrade is categorical - first lifting of sanctions, and then everything else," the official Tanjug agency said.

An informed Serbian source said Milosevic told Kozyrev he could not sell it to his people while the sanctions remained in place.

The peace process has been given urgency by Croatian President Franjo Tudjman's decision to expel UN peacekeepers from Croatia when their mandate expires on March 31.

He says their presence has allowed the Croatian Serbs to consolidate their breakthrough Krajina region during a truce.

Foreign officials fear a new Serb-Croat war could break out, inflaming other smoldering conflicts across the former Yugoslavia.

O.J. witness ordered to appear

LOS ANGELES (AP) - A critical O.J. Simpson defense witness who has threatened to flee the country because of harassment was ordered yesterday to appear for a session to determine how her testimony should be handled.

Rosa Lopez, held up by the defense as a possible alibi witness for the former football star in his double murder trial, was ordered by Superior Court Judge Lance Ito to appear Friday morning.

Simpson, a legend in American football who became an actor and sports commentator after his retirement, has pleaded innocent in the knifing deaths of his ex-wife and Goldman, her acquaintance.

In an affidavit, Lopez has threatened to leave the United States for her native El Salvador because she has grown weary of what the defense called harassment by the news media.

Her attorney, Carl Jones, met with Lopez Friday and said her patience was wearing thin. "She reluctantly agreed to remain another week," Jones said.

Also yesterday, a top investigator in the case, Detective Tom Lange, took the stand to discuss the discovery of evidence.

Prosecutors dramatically concluded last week's court session by carefully unwrapping a black leather glove found near the bodies of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman and showing it to the jury.

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THEOLOGICAL SITES IN JERUSALEM

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Tour guides: Tzvi Zameret (Islamic Studies, Hebrew U.), Kimi Kaplan (Jewish Thought, Hebrew U.), Dr. Idan Yaron (Monastic Life, Academy of Sciences). Price: NIS 135

Monday March 27

THE JORDANIAN BORDER OF PEACE

Led by Ori Dvizi, author of the best-selling Nekeudot Chen, we'll see history in the making. We'll tour the border region now the center of cooperative efforts, the Sheikh Hussein Bridge - bombed in '46 and now rebuilt, Tzvi Zvi, Kfar Rappin, Gaon Hayarden, Kikar Hayarden, Habitrano, the observation post of Hamat Gader - meeting place of the borders of Israel, Jordan and Syria, the confluence of the Yarmuk and Jordan rivers and more, much more.

Tour Guide: David Eitam. Price: NIS 135

Wednesday April 5

THE WINE ROUTE

The ideal tour for the disciples of Bacchus. We'll study the history of wine, compare ancient and modern techniques and sample a few bottles along the way. Accompanied by a vintner, we'll start at Zichron Yaakov, visit a country winery at Mitzpeh Shorashim, see the wine presses on Mt. Meron and for lunch we'll partake of a sumptuous dairy meal at Elin Kamonim, famous for its goats and the ten cheeses they produce, country bread, fresh salad, yogurt and of course, wine.

Tour Guide: David Eitam. Price: NIS 150

Sunday April 16

THE NABATEANS

They lived in the desert from the 4th century BCE, they fought the Hellenistic kings and the kings of the Hasmoneans. They ruled the desert, controlled the trade routes and built the cities of Petra, Avdat, Shivta and Mamshit, and in the end were defeated by the Romans. We'll learn about them, study their agriculture and traditions, visit Avdat, their largest city, rebuilt by the Romans and by the Byzantines, and Mamshit - the city of Kurnab.

Tour Guide: Archaeologist Avner Goren. Price: NIS 145

Wednesday May 10

IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JOSEPHUS FLAVIUS

The battle at Yodfat was terrifying. The Jews didn't stand a chance. They chose to die rather than fall into Roman hands. All except one, their leader Yosef Ben Matityahu, now known as Josephus Flavius. Did he desert his people or did he find another way to serve them, as a historian? We'll visit Yodfat, scene of the battle, now a prosperous Galilee moshav, Zippori - the seat of the Sanhedrin in Talmudic times and home of Judah Hanassi, codifier of the Mishna, the city whose beautiful mosaics and impressive antiquities have been revealed by archaeologists. We'll lunch at Kibbutz Hanaton.

Tour Guide: Archaeologist Motti Aviam. Price: NIS 145

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Was WTC bombing an act of war by Iraq?

MARK MATTHEWS
WASHINGTON

TWO years after a terrorist bomb exploded at New York's World Trade Center, federal investigators believe they have most of the key perpetrators and a motive: anti-Western, anti-American, anti-Israeli Islamic terrorism.

But what if the motive was something else: an act of revenge for the 1991 Gulf War and the sanctions that have crippled Iraq ever since?

And what if the guiding hand was not Sheikh Omar Abdel-Rahman, the blind Moslem firebrand, but Saddam Hussein?

This would make the bombing not just a terrorist act, but an act of war.

It would put pressure on the Clinton administration both to retaliate in some way against Iraq and to adjust its theories about emerging post-Cold War security threats.

The recent capture of the alleged mastermind of the bombing, Ramzi Yousef, might open the way to clearing up the mystery.

Was he a bomb expert who joined a conspiracy by religious extremists, or does he more closely fit the profile of a well-trained agent of Iraqi intelligence?

For much of the past two years, suspicion about Iraqi involvement in the World Trade Center bombing has mostly been fanned by just one person, Laurie Myroie, a former Harvard teacher and Middle East expert at Washington think tanks.

Since mid-1993, she has argued that a Baghdad connection ought to be pursued in the bombing, which occurred close to the second anniversary of the Gulf War.

NOW, she has buttressed her theory with a 242-page narrative that draws heavily from court records from the first New York trial of the bombers. These include records of numerous transatlantic telephone calls between one of the perpetrators and Iraq.

Her case focuses on Yousef, who entered the United States on an Iraqi passport, and on his connections to a region called Baluchistan, which straddles Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

As US officials confirm, this area has a history of ties with Iraq. She believes that Yousef may himself be a Baluch, and may have fled there after the bombing.

Myroie concludes that Iraq's intelligence network in Pakistan is key to the plot. She believes that Yousef, with Iraqi help, assumed the identity of a Pakistani, who may have been killed in Kuwait after the Iraqi invasion.

A second World Trade Center bombing suspect, Abdul Rahman Yassin, was seen by a journalist in Baghdad last June, she says.

Myroie makes no claim to impartiality. Once sympathetic to Iraq, she has since become known as a single-minded advocate of a tough US policy against Saddam Hussein's regime. At the very least, said one official who declined to be named, her campaign has persuaded people to look at a possible Iraqi connection with a fresh eye.

James Fox, the former chief of the FBI's New York bureau, who oversaw the agency's probe into the World Trade Center bombing for 10 months, said: "Her analyses are pretty impressive to me."

He has passed Myroie's material to other longtime investigators, he says, and "when five or six veteran agents go through it and say it's impressive stuff, then that impresses me."

PETER W. Rodman, a former National Security Council and State Department official and a Middle East expert, said Myroie's theory is "plausible and worthy of respect."

He added: "She has done enough to shift the burden of proof onto the US government."

One reason this theory is only now gaining attention is the division between criminal investigations and government policymakers. Investigators look for evidence against specific individuals and are not expected to think in global policy terms.

Because the bombing occurred on American soil, the Justice Department had the lead in the case. In the bombing of Pan American Flight 103 over Scotland, by contrast, US intelligence agencies were given an early and important role in looking for state sponsorship.

In addition, both President Clinton and Secretary of State Warren Christopher are lawyers. Christopher is notably cautious, and believes policy decisions need to be based on the weight of the evidence, not theories or suspicions.

But in the course of the Justice Department's probe into New York and New Jersey-based Moslem radicals, Myroie says, "the whole question of state sponsorship has not been properly examined."

US officials reject the idea that the administration has deliberately avoided coming to grips with Iraq's possible role. Clinton did order a missile attack on a Baghdad intelligence headquarters after being convinced that Iraq plotted to assassinate former President Bush.

And US officials would like nothing better than to have solid evidence with which to campaign at the United Nations for maintaining sanctions against Iraq.

But the enormity of the Trade Center bombing might call for more than merely maintaining sanctions. The bombers apparently intended more than the destruction of one of the towers' lower levels; they hoped that one of the huge towers would topple onto the second. And the judge who presided over the first trial of the bombers raised the possibility that poison cyanide gas could have been released and sucked into the north tower, killing all inside.

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A US expert believes the trial of the World Trade Center bombing is missing the larger picture: that Ramzi Yousef (left) is not the true mastermind behind the attack, but that Saddam Hussein is. (AP / Marilyn Church)

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Saudis discover 'austerity'

DILIP GANGULY
RIYADH

AFTER two decades as the financial powerhouse of the Middle East, a magnet for magnates and poor laborers alike, Saudi Arabia is being buffeted by money troubles and growing criticism of the long-ruling Al-Saud family.

Saudi Arabia is the world's largest oil producer and exporter, with one-quarter of the world's known oil reserves buried under its sands.

This allowed the Al-Sauds to provide a pampered standard of living for their subjects while retaining absolute control over their lives.

The cradle-to-grave welfare system provided free health care and education, subsidized electricity and water, and unlimited domestic telephone calls. There is no income tax.

Now, all that is in flux. The country faces unprecedented problems caused by low oil prices, the still staggering cost of the 1991 Gulf War, and an increasingly outspoken opposition within Saudi Arabia's dominant Wahhabi Moslem sect, in what is already a rigidly Islamic society.

In Riyadh, men in flowing robes sit in cafes, gossiping over cups of fragrant tea and cardamom-scented coffee about rising consumer prices and austerity measures introduced by the government.

Many people wonder if the government's social contract — unlimited largesse in return for unrestricted rule — is in peril.

Burdened with a Gulf War debt of \$55 billion and a five-year dip in oil prices, the government is forcing a belt-tightening by turning to domestic revenues for a bigger share in financing the budget.

Oil exports, which earned about \$30 billion last year, now will provide around 75 percent of government revenues. Still, the revenue burdens being put on ordinary Saudis remain well below First World levels.

Gasoline prices went up from 9 cents a liter to 16 cents — the equivalent of 60 cents a gallon. Electricity and water fees were increased somewhat, small charges were levied for local phone calls, and domestic air fares were raised 20 percent.

No official estimates have been published on how much these measures will raise. But, as an example, the Middle East Economic Survey estimated that the higher gasoline prices alone will raise around \$2.4 billion a year. Austerity measures could generate another \$4 b.

So far, there has been no attempt to introduce income tax or slash welfare — politically explosive measures.

The government's approach has been welcomed by the international financial community.

After cutting spending last year, Riyadh announced its 1995 budget was being reduced a further 6 percent. That left it with a budget deficit of \$4 billion, down from \$11 billion in 1994. Bankers estimate Saudi Arabia's foreign debt at \$70 billion.

(AP)

Observations from Jordan

THE following are some observations on the normalization of Jordan-Israel relations made by Jordanians interviewed for an article on the subject in the publication *Arab News Digest*.

● Fahri Kawar, secretary-general of the Union of Arab Writers: "Opposition to normalization with the enemy is a general national obligation which must be maintained in all fields, from the diplomatic to the cultural."

● The political parties should fight it in the political arena, the tradesmen in the commerce, the unions in the professions, and so on.

● Munas Elrazaz, head of the Association of Jordanian Writers: "There are people who claim that our struggle against Israel has no traditions or culture which can threaten us. But I maintain the struggle is not just against Israel, but also against the racist Zionist movement."

● This movement has tremendous international power which should not be underestimated. We should remember that it controls most of the Western media."

● Nazia Abu Nidal: "The Zionist Jews who failed to establish normal ties with anyone in the course of 2,000 years won't succeed in doing this with the Arabs. Moreover, there are basic differences — because they occupy Arab land and because they will exploit the Arab homeland in the future."

● The Jewish Shylock will try to turn the Arabs into servants and workers for the Hebrew state and the chosen people. The danger of normalization is not in the cultural field, since the enemy has nothing to sell in this area."

● Dr. Hashem Rasbi: "Those who favor normalization with the Zionist enemy present the situation as if we are talking about a



conflict between two cultures, rich Arab culture versus thin Jewish culture. Therefore, they claim, there is nothing to fear.

● There is here an unprecedented confusion of terms. This is not at all a question of conflicting cultures, but of realities. It is the Zionist reality armed with all the elements of modern power, and the weak Arab reality.

● "It is a question of aggressive imperialism power."

● The Zionists and Israel do not have a defined national culture. They represent the most racist and reactionary trends of the West, which are also the most inhuman and fascist. Our relations are one of struggle."

● Isa Elsharbi: "It pains me to see how Arab and Islamic states have accepted the Israeli approach which opposes peace and meets their demands for normalization."

● "This may encourage Israel, which wants to bypass the Palestinian problem and hold onto the land while at the same time gaining peace and normalization with the Arabs."

● Newspaperman Muhamed Harub: "I strongly oppose normalization, which is based on erasing the entire history of our continued struggle against Zionism."

● "We have gone through five decades of wars, violence and organized terrorism from Israel, during which they occupied our land, uprooted most of the Palestinian people, and destroyed the economic infrastructure of the

Palestinian homeland and the surrounding states."

● Newspaperman Tawfiq Abu-Baq'r: "The Islamists among the Palestinians and the Arabs promote conflict which will lead to nothing. The rank-and-file Israeli has to feel that we are true in our desires for full peace and for living together, so that [he] can win the hearts of other Israelis."

● "The Israeli right claims that the call of some Arabs for peace is a deception, or a mere matter of public relations. [It says] the Arabs only want to get back their land and, after they get it, normalization will end."

● "We cannot help the Likud and the right."

● Aldusur (Jordan), February 7.

● MUKTIF'S WARNING

AKRAHEH Sabri, who is Yasser Arafat's appointed mufti of Jerusalem, made the following comment at a news conference in Rabat, Morocco:

● "If Jerusalem is not returned to her Palestinian residents, there will be a tremendous explosion which will engulf not only Palestine, but the entire Arab and Islamic world."

● Voice of Palestine (Autonomy), February 14.

● SYRIA SLAMMED

SHEIKH Hijaz Elbarbar, preacher of the Elkabba Mosque in the Elmal neighborhood of Gaza, attacked Syria for supporting suicide attacks which aim to halt the agreement between Israel and the PLO and prevent the extension of the rule of the Palestinian Authority to the territories.

● "Syria has expressed great concern for the return of all of the Palestinians' territory," said Elbarbar. "So why doesn't Syria send its own suicide terrorists to Israel?"

● Voice of Palestine (Autonomy), February 17.

Gulf dispute goes to World Court

THE World Court in the Hague this week agreed to intervene in an offshore territorial dispute between Qatar and Bahrain that has verged on armed hostilities and heightened political divisions in the Persian Gulf.

By a vote of 10 to 5, the court affirmed its authority to settle the long-running dispute, despite Bahrain's refusal to acknowledge its jurisdiction. Bahrain backed up its rejectionist stance by boycotting the session of the World Court, formally known as the International Court of Justice.

The court also decided, by a vote of 10 to 5, that Qatar's application for a ruling in the dispute was admissible.

"The conflict between Qatar and Bahrain will now be solved through peaceful means," said Dr. Najeeb Naumi, Qatar's legal adviser. "According to the laws of the court, we have won."

Bahrain responded, however, by saying it considers the court case "closed."

By persisting with the court case, Qatar has continued its independent political stance within the Gulf Cooperation Council, a stance which risks giving offense to GCC heavyweight Saudi Arabia.

Saudi King Fahd has proposed that all border disputes in the GCC be settled by mediation within the group this year. Those include a border dispute between Qatar and the Saudi kingdom.

As to whether Bahrain ultimately takes part in the proceedings, Al Naumi said: "If it happens, that will be fine. But their absence will not obstruct the path of judgment."

Even if Bahrain continues its boycott, the court will consider the Gulf state subject to its verdict, and will notify it of all sessions and deadlines to submit arguments.

Report: Iraq smuggling oil to skirt sanctions

MARILYN HENRY
NEW YORK

IRAQ is skirting United Nations sanctions on oil sales by smuggling oil out of the country, a tactic that earned it more than \$700 million in the last year, the *New York Times* reported last week.

The oil is being sold for as little as \$8 a barrel, undercutting the current market price of about \$14 a barrel. With such deep discounts, Iraq has been able to rely on a growing network of oil traders willing to take risks for large profits, the report said.

Trucks move crude oil and refined products through Kurdish territory in Iraq's northern region into Turkey or Iran, where the oil is sold. Oil is also being moved to Mediterranean markets by dozens of small tankers from an Iraqi port south of Basra, the paper said.

The Iraqi venture is expanding with the tacit support of Turkey, Iran and Jordan, the *Times* said. The scheme is said to be managed by government officials who are related to President Saddam Hussein.

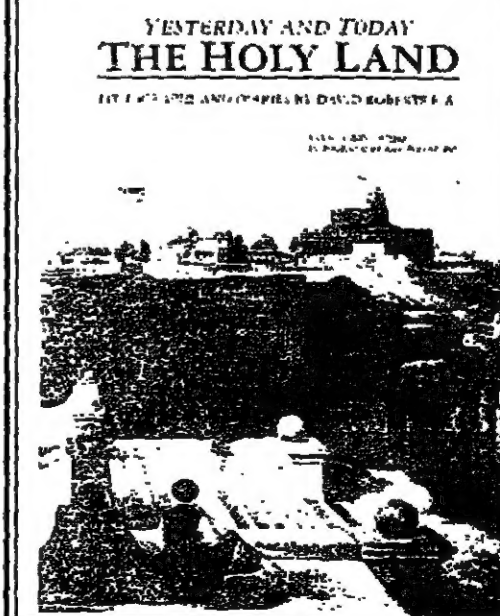
The UN imposed sanctions on Iraq after its invasion of Kuwait in 1990. The UN arrangement allows Iraq to export 75,000 barrels a day to Jordan. The income from those oil sales is designated for the purchase of food and medical supplies.

The *Times* quoted oil industry officials as saying that Iraq is using its secret routes to export some 300,000 barrels a day out of its current estimated daily production of 750,000 barrels. Before the Gulf War, Iraq exported 2.5 million barrels a day.

The Iraqi delegation to the UN dismissed the report. In Washington, the State Department did not deny the smuggling, but called the report "greatly exaggerated."

Iraq's estimated oil reserves are second only to Saudi Arabia's. According to an oil industry newsletter published in France, two French oil concerns have completed talks with Iraq on a project to exploit those reserves once sanctions are lifted.

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Arafat's words

ACCORDING to press reports, Foreign Minister Shimon Peres's entourage was astonished by one of Yasser Arafat's statements in Paris on Monday. Arafat had said that the pictures shown on Israel Television of Gazans celebrating after the Beit Lid massacre were faked. They were actually archive footage, he asserted, showing an unrelated celebration held at another time.

If nothing else, one must appreciate the boldness and sheer gall of such charges. They remind Arafat-watchers of the time he convened a conference of the international press to claim that an imprint of an ancient Judcan coin on the Israeli 10-agarot coin was Israel's imperialistic expansion map. This coin, he said, shows that Israel plans to conquer Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, and parts of Egypt and Saudi Arabia. He even had the coin's outline projected on a screen over a map of the region to make his point.

If the media's reaction at the time is any indication, no one took Arafat seriously. And it is probably safe to assume that this time, too, videotapes of the Gaza Beit Lid celebrations, taken separately by several television crews, will earn his Paris statement the contempt it deserves. But the ease with which world leaders and Israeli officials dismiss such enormities is puzzling.

There can be little doubt that Arafat knows the facts, and that he floats fabrications for a purpose. Perhaps he does this in the hope that some will actually believe him. But mostly these fables are addressed to his own people. Consistently and methodically, he inflames their feelings of victimization. The Israeli plan to conquer all Arab lands, he tells them, and

they fake television reports to make Palestinians look bad.

How persistent and obsessive this theme is can be seen in a videocassette of recent Arafat speeches distributed by The Institute for Peace Education Ltd. The themes of these speeches, delivered in the self-rule areas from January 1, 1995 and telecast on Palestinian Television in Gaza, are always the same: the Palestinian revolution is the longest in history; the Palestinians have made more sacrifices than any other people; the martyrs of the revolution (including the Hamas and Islamic Jihad dead) should be emulated; the agreement with Israel is like Mohammed's peace with the Kureish tribe; and assuming power by the PA in the self-rule areas is the first phase of the PLO's 1974 "plan of phases." (Arafat does not spell out what the plan means. His listeners know that it is the blueprint for the destruction of Israel step by step, rather than in a single confrontation.)

As one Israeli commentator, known for his unequivocal support of the agreement with the PLO, has said: in these speeches Arafat is not preparing the Palestinians for peace. He is preparing them for war.

The government seems to believe that Arafat must be judged only by his deeds, not his words. Indeed, the main test is his readiness to combat terrorism. But leaders' words, particularly in the Middle East, do matter. No Palestinian listening to Arafat can interpret what he says as a call to stop terrorism. On the contrary. Everything he says, whether in Paris or in Gaza, can only be understood to mean that the "armed struggle" is still on, and that agreements with Israel are nothing more than stratagems in its service.

Shadows of hate

IF more proof were needed of the nature of Islam's self-appointed militant fundamentalist guardians, it is unnecessary to look further than their campaign to hang a 14-year-old Christian boy in Pakistan for a minor graffiti offense. Were Pakistan's version of Islamic justice to spread, we should be obliged to hang most of the world's mischievous teenagers.

That fanatics everywhere rant nonsense is an accepted fact of life's eccentricities. What is truly disturbing is the craven surrender of a wide swathe of the Pakistani legal and political establishment to these bloodthirsty so-called holy warriors. It is a pattern we are familiar with in the Middle East - the more the extremists scream their demands, the more mainstream officials attempt futile appeasement.

Salamat Masih, now 14, was convicted by a Lahore court for writing anti-Islamic slogans on a mosque wall. He was 12 at the time. His 40-year uncle is under death sentence for complicity. There is no denying such behavior is irresponsible in any society, whether a mosque, church or synagogue is involved. But, in so young a boy, scrawling slogans is at worst a piece of minor hooliganism. Yesterday, Pakistani police in riot gear had to hold back hundreds of fanatics screaming for blood outside the court hearing the boy's appeal. Militant leaders have threatened open war on Pakistan's Christian community if Masih is not hanged.

Perhaps even more disturbing than a death penalty for a minor offense is the fact that basic evidence is lacking anyway. The boy and two others were accused by a village imam in May 1993. The defense has strongly argued that the state failed to provide any evidence - the offending slogan was wiped off within minutes

and the few witnesses have refused to repeat their testimony. Senior lawyers, asked by judges to advise them as friends of the court, have declared that the case against the Christians is flimsy, or non-existent.

A local human rights group said there were strong indications of a personal grievance behind the charges. One of the three accused was shot dead outside a court, and the imam, Maulvi Fatah, ended up being charged with murder. He is free on bail and the prosecutor has said he doesn't wish to pursue the murder case - but he is busy trying to push "new evidence" for the graffiti charge.

Intimidation of all involved has been rife. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto received death threats and demands that she be prosecuted for contempt after saying the death sentence shocked her. The judges have been reported as saying the boy should be freed but they are afraid to do so. International protests are mounting over this ridiculous case - quite rightly. A letter to the Pakistani president signed by 75 British lawyers yesterday deplored the death sentences and called on him to lift them "and to ensure that in future blasphemy laws are not used to crush the Christian and other religious minorities of Pakistan."

That succinctly states the underlying aim of the extremists and those who would let them hang a boy rather than face up to them. The world should note well how often "kill" and "destroy" crop up in any agenda spouted by the world's Islamic terrorists. First and foremost, those Moslems who believe in a better agenda for Islam should be standing up and shouting loudest against the voices of hate - not cowering in their lengthening shadows.

'No thanks. How about the Jerusalem municipality?'



Crises and apologies

MOSHE ZAK

IN a recent meeting at the Erez checkpoint, Yasser Arafat surprised Yitzhak Rabin by saying, "We all stand to lose from a break in the peace process - but I would suffer more because of the delay in realizing our dream of self-rule."

This uncharacteristic frankness contrasted with Arafat's recent harsh pronouncements about Israel in Gaza, Cairo and Paris.

In public, Arafat tries to create an air of crisis, to squeeze more concessions out of Israel and give the impression that, in a crisis, only Israel stands to lose. This is the purpose behind the PLO executive committee meeting going on in Cairo now.

Shimon Peres, used to Arafat and his associates saying one thing and then its opposite, swallowed Arafat's denial of Peres's statement that the Palestinian Authority may well go along with the "Jenin first" formula. But Yitzhak Rabin finds it difficult to swallow the chairman's duplicity.

When Arafat told him that he had been trying to bring Hamas and the Islamic Jihad round by peaceful means but that, from now on, he would be adopting drastic measures, Rabin couldn't conceal his anger at Arafat's deception. In the past, Arafat had promised to deal harshly with the fundamentalist groups, but was now admitting that he had only negotiated with them.

Rabin's reprimand forced Arafat to say in his own defense: "Don't forget that 140 countries treat me like a president."

Insults aren't very productive in negotiations, but nor is Israel's habit of announcing progress after every meeting. These announcements are meant for do-

mestic consumption, to deflect charges that the Oslo agreement is bankrupt.

But what these misleading announcements do is interfere with the progress of the Oslo agreement, leading the other side to deduce that Israel is feeling pressured and confirming its assumption that it needn't seek compromises since Israel has no choice but to give in.

THERE IS no basis for the illusion that Egyptian involvement in

III winds continue to blow from Cairo

the Israeli-Palestinian talks in Cairo and Paris will make the PLO's position any more flexible. On the contrary: Egypt is making sophisticated efforts to harden the Arab stance against Israel.

Egypt sees Israel as a threat to its hegemony in the Middle East, and so has chosen an issue on which Israel has definite superiority - the nuclear one - and is attempting to unite all the Arab states around it.

But not wishing to appear to oppose the peace process so as not to damage its interests in Washington, Egypt presented the Cairo summit (of Mubarak, Assad and Saudi King Fahd), which set out to restrict Israel's freedom of movement, as something else altogether: an attempt to strengthen the peace process.

One can thus understand Mubarak's anger when Rabin spoke of an ill wind blowing from the

Egyptian Foreign Ministry. And yet the premier was neither disrespectful to Egypt nor threatening - unlike Mubarak, who has threatened Israel if it fails to give in to Egyptian demands on the nuclear issue.

While there is no reason to sour relations with Egypt, there was no need for the unilateral Israeli statement that amounted to an apology for something which didn't need one.

If some announcement to dissipate tension between Jerusalem and Cairo was felt to be necessary, it should have been a joint one. Mubarak ought to have retracted his threats against Israel. Failing this, there was no need for the Israeli statement to end with the compliment that "the prime minister honors and respects the Egyptian foreign minister."

What has Amr Moussa done to deserve honor and respect? Tried to build an anti-Israel front under the nuclear banner? Twisted Israel's arm in negotiating over the nuclear issue?

Have Mubarak's threats turned the ill wind blowing from the Egyptian Foreign Ministry into a pleasant breeze?

The Egyptians doubtless learned a lesson from the way Israel handled the "ill wind" crisis, and it will pass that lesson on to the PLO.

After Israel mistakenly agreed to Moussa's participation in the talks with Arafat, the PLO will now learn to become more proficient at playing a double game, manipulating an atmosphere of crisis to press for Israeli concessions.

The writer, a veteran journalist, comments on public affairs.

Happy families

JOYCE GABRIEL

CHANGE is a two-sided thing. When we think about women's changing roles, it's just as important to look at how men are changing the way they look at themselves and their place in the world. As men reinvent themselves, women could well reap the benefits.

If men's priorities are shifting, and if they are shifting in ways that make their priorities more compatible with women's, then it's much more likely that societal change will occur.

That's why I was so encouraged by a national survey of 1,500 American men conducted by the magazines, *Field & Stream* and *Outdoor Life* - two of the largest circulation publications men read.

The survey focused on how men may have changed over the past decade: from what's important to them to how they've chosen to balance the demands and desires in their lives.

The results are heartening for men, women and children, although they may also just signal some kind of sea change in corporate America and the management of its workforce.

From what the survey showed, men in the '90s are guys most women would like to meet. Among the highlights of what men said about how they view their lives: Relationships are more important than material wealth or career.

Three-quarters of the men said that "having a happy marriage" and "being a good parent" are very important. Two-thirds said "having friends who respect you" is important. Less than one in five said that wealth, fame and power are important.

Most of the men said their greatest satisfaction is in their relationship with their spouse or partner, followed by their friends and the quality of their family life.

THIS IS certainly a great contrast to the "men in the gray flannel suits" who set the standard for corporate America from the 1950s.

They're positive about women playing roles that have traditionally been played by men; they also are positive about men playing roles that have been traditionally played by women. Could it be that equality between the sexes is becoming more than a lofty goal?

The study also found that men, like women, would like to balance work and leisure. Men no longer feel that life is centered on work; a significant proportion feel the purpose of work is to allow them to pursue leisure time and their interests or hobbies.

These men are looking for balance, and many of them feel that work seriously interferes with family leisure time. Even the moral tone seems different. Instead of the "ends justify the means" philosophy that defined the yuppie of a decade ago, the men surveyed seemed to eschew the end game in favor of playing by the rules.

Significantly, 53 percent of the men surveyed said it was important to adhere to the highest standard of ethics, while only 16 percent thought that having power and influence was important. So much for the driving greed of the '80s.

If the study is truly representative of how American men feel today, their views are not much different from those of women. As these values converge, it can only mean more balance and harmony in the relationship between men and women.

But it may also mean that companies and corporations will have to find new ways of managing a workforce where both sexes are now trying to have it all. And we will all struggle with the trade-offs involved in putting personal relationships and family first while pursuing a career.

The good news is that, as men's and women's interests come together, it will be a lot easier to set individual and societal goals that work for both sexes.

(Stanford Advocate)

The Armenian catastrophe

YITZCHAK KEREM

THE Education Ministry was right to reject the Armenian issue for inclusion in its high-school curriculum on genocide, despite efforts this week by Armenians and their supporters to force them to reconsider.

The deaths of hundreds of thousands of Armenians wasn't part of any governmental plan of annihilation. The 1915 massacre was part of a greater conflict between Turks and Armenians. While the Armenians have constantly inflated the number of victims, the Turks have denied responsibility for the deaths.

At first, the Armenians claimed that 600,000 had been killed; soon afterwards, that figure jumped to 1.5 million. But the official Ottoman census for 1914 gives an Armenian population of only 1,245,000. Today, the most astute Armenian historians would put the figure at well below 1.5 million.

From 1890 to 1896, there was annual Armenian agitation, terror and violence against Ottoman and Turkish rule. This continued sporadically. After every Armenian attempt to overturn the Ottoman throne, the Turks retaliated excessively and disproportionately against Armenian population concentrations.

The archives of the chief of staff in Ankara contain evidence of an Armenian threat to Turkey in 1915 and of Armenian collaboration with the Russian army in its invasion. Undoubtedly, there were deaths and atrocities on both sides, but calling the deaths of Armenians genocide is an exaggeration. The Turks did murder innocent civilians in places like Trebizond, Zeitoun and Erzerum - but the Armenians carried out fierce massacres against the Turks at Van, Syria, and

elsewhere. When 700,000 Armenians were relocated by the Turks in 1917, some 300,000 died. This was their tragedy. There are higher figures of casualties in their continued conflict against the Turks, but nowhere do they reach the exaggerated figures of one million and above, which are always cited, usually by people who are not historians.

THERE IS no proof that there were Turkish orders to massacre the Armenian population. The famous telegram, attributed to Interior Minister Talat Pasha, ordering massacres that was uncovered by Allenby's army when it captured Aleppo in 1918 appears to have been forged by Armenians in Paris. Many Armenian scholars have recognized this in recent years.

The Ottoman archives contain several orders from Talat Pasha regarding investigations to find those responsible for attacking deportation caravans. Some 1,500 Turkish soldiers were

attacked figures of one million and above, which are always cited, usually by people who are not historians.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POINT MISSED

Sir, - I refer to the letter of February 13 written by Rev. Tim Ehrlich. Methodist pastor visiting on Pennsylvania. It was heartening to read that he loved our country to the extent that he would be happy to live in Israel. He could pay us no greater tribute.

However, Rev. Ehrlich sadly misses the point when discussing our political situation in respect of the closure by the government of the territories when he refers to such a closure as a punishment "of all Moslems for the acts of a few." Collective punishment is not the aim, nor the objective of the closure; it is meant to protect and preserve the lives of the citizens of Israel - the foremost duty of any government. The closure was implemented to prevent the crossing of treacherous terrorists. It has been proved time and again that during each closure the incidence of acts of terror is sharply reduced. The preservation of one life is far more vital than the collective punishment that may result.

The Christian admonition to turn the other cheek, to which Rev. Ehrlich alludes, is an admirable one, but cannot be applied to the chain of violence and murderous acts emanating from those quarters that seek the destruction of Israel.

The Palestinian Authority must come to the full realization that only by taking strong, specific and complete steps to eliminate terror can closures come to an end. If not, the collective punishment alluded to by your correspondent will unfortunately become a constant, unavoidable by-product of future closures.

SAM FISHER

Jerusalem.

THE CLOSURE

Sir, - Your editorial of February 10, "The closure says," indirectly admits that Judea and Samaria are not part of Israel: "Israel does not owe the Palestinians of Judea and Samaria a living.... It does owe its citizens personal security. If that can best be achieved by depriving Palestinians of employment places in Israel, so be it."

The closure seems to be this government's most popular achievement. However, it seems still a long way to grasping that the Palestinians also deserve to be citizens of a state - a state which owes them their personal security and the possibility of making a living.

Only when basic needs are somehow secured can people be expected to "live and let live." This is true for Jews as it is for Arabs.

BEATE ZILVERSMIDT

Holon.

SEPARATION

Sir, - Up to the Six Day War, there was complete separation between the State of Israel and the "West Bank" occupied then by Jordan and completely *Judenrein*. This did not prevent the fedayeen from carrying out acts of terrorism despite the fact that it was the Jordanian interest and policy to do what they could to prevent attacks on Israel. The Palestinian state will have a long-term policy of encouraging terror as a step to its aim of eventually getting rid of the State of Israel and the Jewish presence in Palestine.

KENNETH L. COHEN

Jerusalem.

POLICE FORCE

Sir, - At the very same time as the terrorist attack at Beit Lid (January 22), a group of about 35 women who call themselves Women in Green were protesting outside the Prime Minister's Office. They were surrounded by about 50 police who, without provocation, attacked and pushed these elderly women.

One wonders how many lives could have been saved if Shaul and Rabin would have used their police force to protect our people instead of beating and bullying old women.

RTA GRIN

Jerusalem.

501 من الامم

Japanese magazine choked on its taste of revisionism

'Marco Polo' bit off too much by engaging in Holocaust denial. Then it bit the dust. Mike Jacobs writes from Tokyo

A giant Japanese publishing company this month held a funeral for a young, successful, muckraking, right-of-center magazine that sank into some muck of its own making.

The current-affairs publication *Marco Polo* - which, since being launched in 1991, achieved a circulation of 200,000 - ran a 10-page denial of the Holocaust by a historical revisionist with no journalistic credentials. The article caused an international uproar which soon competed for news space with the aftermath of last month's Kobe earthquake.

"[The article is] like making a public denial of the dropping of the A-bomb on Hiroshima," Rabbi Abraham Cooper, of the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles, wrote in a protest to the Japanese ambassador in Washington. "It's a monstrous attack on history and the innocent victims of Nazism."

Jewish organizations in Japan and the US rang alarm bells. Major companies withdrew advertising from *Marco Polo*, and the magazine's publisher, the respected Bungei Shunju Company, admitted its error.

Company president Kengo Tanaka first apologized for causing "immeasurable pain" to the Jewish people. He withdrew that issue from newsstands, closed down the magazine and reassigned its editorial staff to other publications. Finally, Tanaka resigned "to restore public confi-

dence at home and abroad in the company," Bungei Shunju said in a statement.

The article, which denied the existence of gas chambers, was a rehash of material that had been distributed by the Institute for Historical Review, an extreme right-wing group actively denying the Holocaust. It was written by Masanori Nishioka, a member of a self-styled group studying translations of revisionist tracts from Europe and the US.

Nishioka is known for writing letters to the editors of English-language dailies to deny the Holocaust, and has gained notoriety for his eccentric theories on poison gas and its circulatory properties.

His article was rejected by several magazines before being accepted by *Marco Polo* editor Kazuyoshi Hanada, who had a reputation for sensationalism and who sought to stir controversy. Recently, the magazine had to run three apologies for running misleading information.

Hanada compounded the damage by running a plug of Nishioka's piece, stating: "The greatest taboo of postwar history is being kept a secret.... There are major suspicions concerning the 'Holocaust' [sic] and the massacre of Jews at the hands of Nazis.... There is scant evidence that so many could be killed in gas chambers."

THE TIMING of the article wor-



This reproduction of the February 1995 cover page of the now defunct Japanese magazine 'Marco Polo' also shows the first two pages of photographs which went with a story denying the use of gas chambers in the Holocaust. (AP)

ried Jewish groups. There is concern now that the institute activated international cells to disrupt and counter commemorations marking the 50th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. Among the events is a Holocaust photo exhibition, opening soon in Tokyo, which will show the Japanese the crimes

their wartime ally perpetrated against the Jews.

Polish ambassador Henryk Lipszyc said the article "takes advantage of the general ignorance of the Japanese public towards such matters. This allows contributors like Nishioka to add even further to [the readers'] ignorance."

A member of the Committee Against Antisemitism in Japan noted that the article "didn't shed any new light on the subject and not a single interview appears. In fact, the whole feature is nothing more than a rehash of past revisionist publications attempting to deny the Holocaust."

What's even more disturbing is that the writer makes repeated references to himself as being a medical practitioner in such a way as to elicit credibility for his political beliefs.

When February's issue hit the stands in mid-January, a copy was obtained by the Committee Against Antisemitism and by the Anti-Defamation League.

In letters to major foreign companies which advertised in that issue of *Marco Polo*, the Simon Wiesenthal Center urged them to stop all future advertising in "a publication which has sadly chosen the path of hate mongering."

The Israeli Embassy hastily set up a meeting with the editors. But it proved fruitless. An Israeli diplomat came away frustrated and angry, saying he was ready for "war." "It's a crime," he exclaimed. "In Germany, people who publish such deeply offensive material are liable to criminal prosecution."

Marco Polo's deputy editor admitted, "We Japanese do not have much knowledge about these matters."

Bungei Shunju offered to meet again with an Israeli diplomat to discuss ways of stopping growing international pressure. The Israeli Embassy turned down an offer to write a response to Nishioka's article, saying: "We'll not climb into a sumo ring and give substance to the editor's guise of impartiality."

The pressure was turned up when Volkswagen suspended advertising in the magazine. Its chairman, Ferdinand Piech, was "appalled and angered by the irresponsible statements made in the article." Mitsubishi Motors, Mitsubishi Electric and Cartier did so as well, prompting Tanaka to eject *Marco Polo* and admit that "the article was lacking in impartiality and fairness."

One German journalist remarked: "If such a large editorial staff could not distinguish between historical fact and fiction, then there must be something very wrong with the Japanese educational system."

The foreign press corps in Tokyo used the case to highlight Japan's shortcomings in adapting to international standards.

Oscar Wilde: The ultimate in paradoxes

IAN IRVINE
LONDON

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times.

For Oscar Wilde, 1856, his 41st year, brought his greatest triumph. On the opening night of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, the reception from the audience was phenomenal.

The actor Allan Aynsworth, who played Algernon Moncrieff, recalled as an old man: "In my 53 years of acting, I never remember a greater triumph than the first night of *The Importance of Being Earnest*."

The next day the critics declared it a comic masterpiece and the *New York Times* announced: "Oscar Wilde may be said to have at last, and by a single stroke, put his enemies under his feet."

It was the apogee of Wilde's precocious literary career. After nearly two decades of prominence in the arts, he had been acknowledged as the leader of all that was contemporary in culture, a master of paradox, a witty anatomist of society's hypocrisies, and famously the most dazzling talker of his time.

The year 1895 also brought him exposure, prosecution and disgrace, then imprisonment, bankruptcy, divorce and exile.

Within four months of *Earnest's* acclaim, Wilde stood convicted at the Old Bailey on seven counts of gross indecency and was sentenced to the maximum penalty then allowed - two years hard labor. The trial for homosexuality of such a notable figure caused a national sensation and moral panic.

Having followed Flaubert's advice to impress the bourgeois, Wilde now found himself at their mercy in a place where his intelligence and wit were little protec-

tion. His enemies execrated him as a high priest of evil, and respectable England recoiled in horror. His name was removed from the posters outside the theaters where his plays were being performed.

Was he a martyr to the Philistines, who hated his creed of art for art's sake and his mockery of their values? Or more a martyr to the hypocrisy of the upper classes who tolerated sexual promiscuity, both homosexual and heterosexual, as long as it remained publicly unacknowledged?

Wilde had taken few precautions to hide his predilections in either his life or his works. *The Importance of Being Earnest* was in part a coded parable of homosexual double life; both main characters have alternative existences in order to pursue their own desires - and "earnest" meant "gay" in the homosexual slang of the time.

In fact, Wilde's downfall was not directly caused by the indulgence of his sexual tastes, but rather by his passionate involvement with a "homme fatal" who shared them, Lord Alfred Douglas.

Vain, spendthrift and hysterical, "Bosie" possessed only minor literary talent, but undoubted beauty.

The attraction proved fatal for Wilde, who idealized his relationship with the young aristocrat in terms of Platonic philosophy.

Nemesis occurred when Wilde became unwillingly caught in the crossfire of Douglas's feud with his admittedly near-certifiable father, the marquis of Queensberry.

The peer's increasingly deranged attacks on Wilde led to the latter's suing Queensberry for libel, egged on by Douglas. The suit's collapse, following the production of evidence of Wilde consorting with male prostitutes, led rapidly to his arrest - although



Wilde: Condemned man or hero of modern times?

not so rapidly that Wilde could not have caught the boat train to Paris.

Why did he stay to face the music? Most likely because it was, of all options, the least unheroic. A life as a fugitive did not appeal.

He would face his accusers - an Irishman in England, a republican in an empire, a worshipper of beauty in a Philistine world. A tragic hero, condemned for love by a dishonest society, was a role he could relish.

As he listened to the prosecution's closing speech - "an appalling denunciation which sounded like a thing out of Tacitus, like a passage in Dante, like one of Savonarola's indictments of the popes at Rome" - he felt "sickened with horror. Suddenly it occurred to me, 'How splendid it would be, if I was saying all this about myself.' I saw then at once that what is said of a man is nothing. The point is who says it."

Even in the dock his imagination was transforming the circumstances of his downfall into paradoxes.

The search for alien life moves south

GEOFF SPENCER
SYDNEY

THE huge radio astronomy observatory sits in the outback 350 kilometers west of Sydney - and perhaps less than five light-years from extraterrestrial civilization.

For five months scientists funded by top computer industry whizzes are using the Parkes telescope to scan billions of radio waves across the galaxy in search of extraterrestrial life on 200 stars.

The scan is part of a larger project, dubbed Project Phoenix, in which observatories around the world are focusing on 1,000 stars for at least the rest of the decade.

It will be the biggest and most systematic sweep of its kind across the southern skies. It continues the quest for proof of alien life that was begun by NASA, which had its funding cut by the deficit-conscious Congress in 1993.

Some US lawmakers have dismissed the search for other beings in the universe as pointless. But SETI, the private California-based institute that has picked up where NASA left off, regards it as vital.

"It is the most important question the human species has asked itself... are we alone or are we not? Either way it's mighty important," said scientist Jill Tarter, one of a group of former NASA astrophysicists now with SETI, which stands for search for extraterrestrial intelligence.

The search is backed by Hewlett-Packard Company co-

founders David Packard and William Hewlett, Intel Corporation cofounder Gordon Moore, Paul Allen, cofounder of Microsoft Corporation, and science-fiction author Arthur C. Clarke.

Most of the stars that will be watched are similar in age and size to our sun and so could have Earth-like planets capable of sustaining life, said project spokesman Seth Shostak.

The closest is about 4.5 light-years from Earth, the most distant 150 light-years away. A light-year - the distance light travels in a vacuum in one year - equals 9.46 trillion km.

The project's aim is to identify artificial signals amid the deluge of natural radio waves constantly pulsing through the cosmos. Such a find could be a sign of extraterrestrial civilization, the scientists say.

"It's like Columbus getting his sailing ships together and heading out for America," said Kel Wellington, of Australia's Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, which operates the Parkes Observatory.

Attempts to listen in on alien signals have gone on for decades. This exercise will be much more than twiddling a radio dial.

Intricate computerized equipment, developed by NASA for its now defunct research effort, has been attached to the 63-meter

Parkes dish. It will monitor and analyze 28 million radio channels simultaneously in a spectrum which covers radio, television and microwave signals.

"If an [alien] signal is found, it won't be heard by a human ear. We'll see it first on a computer screen," said Shostak.

Such messages might have taken generations to cross vast distances of space - and it's unlikely any earthing would understand it.

Earth itself has been sending artificial signals since radio was invented a century ago - perhaps not enough time for distant extraterrestrials to know of our existence, Shostak said.

Plenty of possible alien signals have been reported by radio astronomers in the past but none were verified. Elaborate cross-checking will be done by a smaller radio telescope at Coonabarabran, 300 km. northeast of Parkes, both of which are in New South Wales.

The scientists are convinced extraterrestrial intelligence, probably far more advanced than our own, is somewhere out there. And they promise they will announce any confirmed discovery quickly.

Until then, they regard it as a matter of when, not if.

"We could have success at any step, but we are prepared for the long journey. It might take a decade. It might take a century," said project physicist John Dreyer. (Associated Press)

Dictionary of Jewish Biography

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Israel Corp. buys ICL for \$115m.

THE Israel Corporation has concluded its \$115.5 million purchase of Israel Chemicals, announcing yesterday it has reached a financing agreement with Bank Hapoalim.

According to the deal, Hapoalim will grant the Israel Corpora-

tion a \$60 million loan. To secure the agreement, the Israel Corporation has pledged, or mortgaged, shares.

Hapoalim stands ready to offer the Israel Corporation further fi-

nancing of \$54m. "The sale is complete at this point," said Israel Corporation secretary Yehoshua Neeman, adding that Israel Corporation head Shaul Eisenberg will take

over as chairman of ICL "within the next few days." Neeman said the Israel Corporation now intends "to further expand its business activities on the international market."

Ban Hapoalim could not be reached for comment.

Mortgage banks plan to increase rates

MORTGAGE banks intend to go ahead with plans to hike rates, despite the Bank of Israel's lowering of interest rates yesterday.

The central bank announced it would lower the prime lending rate beginning March 1 from 17 percent to 16.3%.

A Tefahot spokesman said the current high yields on the bond market, which determine mortgage lenders' cost of money, justifies a rise in rates.

"We don't know how the lowering of interest rates will influence the market," the spokesman said.

"We've decided to wait a few days before making a final decision," he said. "There is no doubt that current yields are very high."

The crisis on the bond market, which has pushed up yields, is mainly due to the large flow of

money out of the provident funds.

As a result of the sharp drop on bond prices, short-term yields have gone up to above 5.5%, while long-term yields have risen to above 4.5%.

Every time bond yields go up, it is more expensive for mortgage banks to raise money, so the banks pass on the rise to the consumer.

At the start of this week, Bank Leumi Mortgage Bank decided to raise rates on mortgages from March 1 by 0.5% to 5.8% for all periods.

Bank Hapoalim, Bank Discount, First International Bank and Tefahot are also expected to follow suit in the next few days.

"We will most probably raise

our rates but have not yet decided by how much and when," a Bank Hapoalim spokesman said. "Unlike Leumi, we will offer different rates on short-, medium- and long-term mortgages."

In other news, Tefahot, the largest mortgage bank in the country, reported there was a complete change in the make-up of the bank's borrowers in 1994.

There was a 17% drop in borrowers with mortgage rights last year from 1993, following three consecutive years of continued growth in borrowers with rights.

Tefahot said most of the drop reflected a fall in new immigrants' demand for mortgages.

The bank blamed the decline mainly on the rise in housing prices, which deterred those with mortgage rights but encouraged the well-to-do to buy real estate.

El-Op reopens plant after court orders union to leave

RACHEL NEIMAN

EL-OP's employees on personal contracts will return to work today after the Rehovot District Court issued a temporary injunction declaring the factory off-limits to union workers.

Management closed down the Ness Ziona laser-optics factory two weeks ago after it said contract negotiations with the union were deadlocked.

Workers responded by maintaining a presence inside the factory.

The union staged protests outside the plant as well, highlighted by a demonstration last Wednesday in front of Tel Aviv's Dan Hotel, which is owned by El-Op's Federman group.

In that demonstration, police arrested nine protesters for disorderly conduct, including workers committee chairman Bezalel Hanish.

Three policemen and two demonstrators were injured during the protest.

The dispute stems from an 11-month conflict over collective agreement terms and wages.

About 300 personal contract employees will return to work today, while the remaining 600 union workers have set up a protest tent opposite the plant on property owned by the Ness Ziona municipality.

They were visited yesterday by Ness Ziona Mayor Yossi Shvo and MK Rafi Eini.

The Histadrut has pledged full support to El-Op's workers.

Ness Ziona Histadrut representative Hanan Fruchs, however, has asked the workers not to disturb the peace until the court rules next week if the union workers are allowed to enter the plant.

Koor sells shares in Thai factory to investors for \$5.2 million

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

KOOR sold its shares in an oil extracting factory in Thailand for \$5.2 million to a group of Thai investors yesterday.

Koor owned 30 percent of the company's shares.

It purchased them several years ago when it gained control of Etz Hazait.

The Thai company was established based on Israeli know-how.

According to the investors' partnership agreement, the factory was managed by people in Thailand.

Koor received annual management fees of about \$80,000 from the plant.

Two years ago, Koor decided to provide professional management advice to the Thai firm,

which is scheduled to register its shares for trading on the Bangkok Stock Exchange.

Koor offered its local partners to buy its shares in the company shortly after the oil extracting factory's business improvement plan was completed.

Koor said the sale is in the framework of the conglomerate's strategic decision to concentrate on specific areas.

Tadiran subsidiary wins \$62.5m. deal from US Army

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

TELLA-COM, a Tadiran subsidiary in the US, will manufacture military communications equipment valued at \$62.5 million for the US Army, the company announced to the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange yesterday.



Yisrael Zamir: This is third order Tadiran has received from the US Army.

Tadiran said the US-based General Dynamics has decided to award Tella-Com 50 percent of a \$125 million order it received from the US Army.

General Dynamics was awarded 45% of the US Army's Singars project, a tender for the supply of military communications equipment.

Tadiran general manager Yisrael Zamir said this is the third order the company has received for supply of military communications products to the US Army.

The company has already been awarded orders of \$150m. in the

framework of the Singars project. Tella-Com manufactures 1,000 communications systems per month for the US Army.

Dan, Sharon regions attract eight bids each for radio stations

HELEN KAYE

THERE were eight bids each for the Dan and Sharon areas in the tender for the first seven commercial regional radio stations, after all 34 bids were made public by the Second Radio and Television Authority (SRTA).

The lucrative Dan region contains Tel Aviv and its satellite cities of Ramat Gan, Holon, and Givatayim. The mostly affluent Sharon area goes north to Netanya and south to Ramat Hasharon and Hod Hasharon. There were six bids for the Negev station and four each for the Eilat

and Haifa stations. Jerusalem and the Galilee/Golan regions attracted only two bids each. Each of the groups submitting the bids comprises several investors. SRTA is expected to make a decision on the franchisees by March. In contrast to TV's Channel 2, where three franchisees share airtime, each radio station will be awarded to only one group. The stations are expected to support themselves via advertising revenues and will be required to pay the government a percentage of their income in commissions and license fees.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Passport won't continue investment in Regina: Joel subsidiary PassPort will not continue its investment in Atlanta-based Regina, the company announced yesterday. PassPort acquired the vacuum cleaner manufacturer, the fourth largest in the US, for \$2 million last September. PassPort invested some \$7.5m. in Regina but was unable to solve the lagging company's liquidity problem. After weighing an additional \$5m. investment or the introduction of a strategic partner, PassPort decided to let Regina's management to file for bankruptcy under Chapter 11.

Elta general manager announces resignation: Elta deputy general manager Moti Shmueli will be nominated to take over from general manager Yehuda Frenkel, who has resigned for the second time. Several months ago Frenkel resigned due to a difference of opinion with the board concerning workers' wage demands but he was persuaded to stay on. But yesterday Frenkel told board chairman Moshe Keret he would end his term in April. Elta's privatization process has been stalled due to workers' objections.

Maritime gains control of Carmel Bank: Businessman Eli Kind, one of Carmel Mortgage Bank's major shareholders, and Israel Maritime Bank have signed an agreement which will allow Maritime to gain control of Carmel Bank. Maritime Bank currently heads a consortium which holds 44 percent of Carmel's shares. Maritime's management is also negotiating with other Carmel shareholders in an attempt to increase its stake in the bank. Kind holds 15.3% of Carmel's shares. In an announcement to the bourse, Maritime said Kind will receive a put option to exchange his shares in Carmel Bank for Maritime Bank shares. Kind will have to give up 3.54% of Carmel Bank's shares for each Maritime Bank share. Kind will be able to exercise the option over a one-year period, starting April 10, 1997.

Petition demands probe of cooperative association registrar: Jerusalem city councilman Ornan Yekutieli petitioned the High Court of Justice yesterday to demand that Labor and Social Affairs Minister Ora Namir investigate reported allegations against Uri Zeligman, the registrar of cooperative associations. In a *Yedioth Aharanot* article last year, Zeligman was accused of masquerading as a judge, forging protocols in his office and lying about his army and academic record. The article also said Zeligman claimed he was promised by Supreme Court President Meir Shamgar that after three years' service as registrar, he would be appointed a district court judge. The petition questioned why Namir had never investigated these allegations, if only to clear Zeligman.

Research and development agreement signed with Singapore: Israel and Singapore signed an industrial research and development cooperation agreement, the Industry and Trade Ministry reported yesterday. The sides agreed to promote research and development between the countries' industries and fund joint projects. Industry and Trade Ministry chief scientist Shuki Gleitman said the main goal of cooperation with Singapore is to assist Israel's activities in other Far Eastern countries such as China, Malaysia and Indonesia.

Energy Ministry rejects new regulations on gas stations: The Energy Ministry has come out against new Public Works Department regulations regarding the minimal distance between gas stations. The new regulations would allow gas stations to be built at distances ranging from 50 to 120 kilometers, depending on the type of road.

The Energy Ministry said the Public Works Department is overstepping its bounds. "Canceling the [current] dividing lines between gas stations would give new life to competition between the fuel companies," it said. "The Public Works Department cannot disrupt a procedure so important to the Israeli market without coordinating with the [other] offices connected to the matter."

WORLD BRIEFS

Shawmut, Fleet Financial to merge: Fleet Financial Group Inc and Shawmut National Corp said yesterday they will merge into a \$3.7 billion company that creates a regional New England banking giant ranking as one of America's top 10 banks. The proposal is for a stock swap under which Shawmut stockholders will get Fleet stock worth \$30, a solid premium over the \$20.625 at which the stock closed Friday.

Britain hopes bond market reform will draw investors: Britain announced plans yesterday to attract more investors to buying its bonds by establishing a fully open market in "gilt repo," the sale and repurchase of British government bonds, from next January.

Unilever profits bubble up despite Power failure: Unilever Plc/NV, the Anglo-Dutch food and consumer products group, reported a 24 percent rise in 1994 profit yesterday, but was tarnished by a multimillion-pound write-off of its controversial Power range of detergents. The sprawling consumer group said 1994 pre-tax profits rose to £2.383 billion from 1993's £1.927b. on sales up six percent at £29.666b.

TA Court: Carmel Carpets liquidator can't talk to press

GALIT LIPKIS BECK

THE Tel Aviv District Court yesterday ordered Carmel Carpets liquidator Yosef Cohen not to speak to the press without receiving its approval, except to relay information said in court.

MK Avraham Shapira and his wife Tova said Cohen has cast doubt on the family's activities due to allegations that have not been proven in court.

Yigal Arnon, the Shapiras'

lawyer, argued that the liquidator, in his role as a court clerk, must refrain from passing on information to the press.

Cohen said this is not Shapira's first attempt to squelch media reporting of his legal problems.

He said Shapira can sue him for slander but has no right to stop him from giving interviews because he does not agree with his views.

Granit Hacarmel net profits remain virtually unchanged

COMPANY RESULTS

RACHEL NEIMAN

GRANIT Hacarmel announced annual net profits of NIS 50.5 million last year, virtually the same as the NIS 50.1m. registered in 1993.

Revenues rose to NIS 1.98 billion from NIS 1.97b., while the price per share went up to NIS 0.26 from NIS 0.18.

Fourth quarter net profits jumped to NIS 21.45m. from NIS 8.9m. during the previous quarter.

Fuel sales reached 1.8 million tons last year, compared with 1.75 million in 1993.

Some 553,000 tons of fuel were sold during the fourth quarter, a 22 percent rise from the 454,000 tons reported in 1993's comparable quarter.

General manager Aryeh Shachar said subsidiary Sonol was continuing its program of expanding and upgrading its stations.

Shachar will retire from his position at the end of this month.

Board chairman Yossi Rosen said he was satisfied with the company's financial results, as were principal shareholders Clal and Koor.

Electra Consumer Goods re-

ported a rise in annual net profits to NIS 20.8m. from NIS 13.5m. in 1993.

Revenues jumped to NIS 473m. from NIS 306.1m.

The company announced it has received a \$7m. order for 15,000 portable air conditioner units from Electrolux, a US firm.

The units will be sold in Germany, France, Italy and other countries under the Electrolux name.

Electra's French subsidiary L'Air Conditionne contributed \$56m. to the annual sales.

Alpex Metal suffered a NIS 6.36m. net loss last year, compared with a NIS 4.47m. net loss in 1993.

Serfaton Resins Chemicals reported a NIS 129m. net loss last year, compared with a net gain of NIS 3.1m. in 1993.

Leumi Finance reported an increase in net profits to NIS 4.1m. from NIS 3.8m. in 1993.

Revenues rose to NIS 9.4m. from NIS 8.7m.

Fourth quarter net profits were virtually unchanged at NIS 1.18m., compared with NIS 1.19m. during the parallel quarter in 1993. Revenues fell to NIS 2.4m. from NIS 2.6m.

Reading between the lines... you have time for trading action until 11 PM.

JOIN 108 TELEBANK.
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ISRAEL DISCOUNT BANK

STATE OF ISRAEL
Ministry of Energy and the Infrastructure
Electricity Administration

Notice Pursuant to the Electricity Wayleaves Order

The Israel Electric Corporation has requested me to use my powers, under the Electricity Wayleaves Order, and to allow it to carry out work in Parcel 8, Block 19276.

The work consists of:
 the erection of a 161 kV electric power line.

Anyone owning land or rights in this parcel is asked to write to me by March 2, 1995, giving his agreement to the execution of this work, or giving reasons for objecting to the carrying out of the work. The address to write to is: Electricity Administration, Min. of Energy and the Infrastructure, P.O.B. 13106, Jerusalem 91130.

My representative will be on the site concerned between 11:30 a.m. and 12 noon on March 6, 1995, to give explanations and hear objections to the said work.

Dr. Shlomo Brovender
 Director, Electricity Administration

For current information on potential growth securities in Israel and the U.S., call:

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Our specialty trained sales personnel will be available to discuss your investment needs.

ISRAEL MONEY MARKETS				
Petah (foreign currency deposit rates) (22.2.95)				
Currency (deposit term)	3 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	
U.S. dollar (\$250,000)	5.575	5.500	6.250	
U.S. dollar (\$100,000)	4.750	5.125	6.000	
U.S. dollar (\$50,000)	4.500	5.000	5.750	
U.S. dollar (\$20,000)	4.250	4.750	5.500	
U.S. dollar (\$10,000)	4.000	4.500	5.250	
U.S. dollar (\$5,000)	3.750	4.250	5.000	
U.S. dollar (\$2,500)	3.500	4.000	4.750	
U.S. dollar (\$1,000)	3.250	3.750	4.500	
U.S. dollar (\$500)	3.000	3.500	4.250	
U.S. dollar (\$250)	2.750	3.250	4.000	
U.S. dollar (\$100)	2.500	3.000	3.750	
U.S. dollar (\$50)	2.250	2.750	3.500	
U.S. dollar (\$25)	2.000	2.500	3.250	
U.S. dollar (\$10)	1.750	2.250	3.000	
U.S. dollar (\$5)	1.500	2.000	2.750	
U.S. dollar (\$2.50)	1.250	1.750	2.500	
U.S. dollar (\$1.00)	1.000	1.500	2.250	
U.S. dollar (\$0.50)	0.750	1.250	2.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.25)	0.500	1.000	1.750	
U.S. dollar (\$0.10)	0.250	0.750	1.500	
U.S. dollar (\$0.05)	0.000	0.500	1.250	
U.S. dollar (\$0.025)	0.000	0.250	1.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.01)	0.000	0.000	0.750	
U.S. dollar (\$0.005)	0.000	0.000	0.500	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0025)	0.000	0.000	0.250	
U.S. dollar (\$0.001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000000000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000000000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000000000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000000000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000000000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000000000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000000000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000000000000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000000000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000000000000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000000000000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000000000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000000000000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000000000000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000000000000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000000000000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000000000000000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000000000000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.0000000000000000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000000000000000005)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.000000000000000000025)	0.000	0.000	0.000	
U.S. dollar (\$0.00000000000000000001)	0.000	0.000	0.000	

Key Representative Rates

US dollar	NIS 3.9060	+0.10%
Sterling	NIS 4.7546	+0.08%
Mark	NIS 2.0403	+0.22%

NYSE STOCK MARKET

Stock	Price	% Change
DJ Industrial	2862.50	+0.75
DJ Transport	1012.12	+0.15
DJ Utility	1012.12	+0.15
DJ Bond	1012.12	+0.15
DJ Dividend	1012.12	+0.15
DJ Volatility	1012.12	+0.15

Other stock market indexes

Index	Value	% Change
FTSE 100	3024.4	+0.75
Nikkei 225	12119.1	+0.15
DAX	12119.1	+0.15

Israeli stocks in NY

Stock	Price	% Change
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5

Comstock Trading Ltd. (Data 21-Feb-95)

INFLATION

Dollar crossrates (US)

Currency	Rate	% Change
Yen	147.12	+0.05
Mark	2.0403	+0.22
Swiss	1.4836	+0.05

Libor rates

Rate	Value	% Change
3 months	6.25	0
6 months	6.25	0
9 months	6.25	0

Foreign financial data courtesy of CommStock Trading Ltd.

INFLATION

US commodities

Commodity	Price	% Change
Crude Oil	22.12	+0.15
Natural Gas	1.12	+0.05
Gold	375.45	+0.05

London commodities

Commodity	Price	% Change
Crude Oil	22.12	+0.15
Natural Gas	1.12	+0.05
Gold	375.45	+0.05

Spot market metals (US)

Metal	Price	% Change
Copper	1.12	+0.05
Aluminum	0.85	+0.05
Zinc	0.75	+0.05

New York metal futures

Metal	Price	% Change
Copper	1.12	+0.05
Aluminum	0.85	+0.05
Zinc	0.75	+0.05

London metal futures

Metal	Price	% Change
Copper	1.12	+0.05
Aluminum	0.85	+0.05
Zinc	0.75	+0.05

Comstock Trading Ltd. (Data 21-Feb-95)

TEL AVIV STOCKS

Multi-sided trading				Two-sided trading											
Commercial Banks				Oil Exploration				AFTERNOON				MORNING			
Name	Price	% Change	Volume	Name	Price	% Change	Volume	Name	Price	% Change	Volume	Name	Price	% Change	Volume
Am. Bank	77.0	0.0	100	Am. Bank	77.0	0.0	100	Am. Bank	77.0	0.0	100	Am. Bank	77.0	0.0	100
Bank of America	64.0	0.0	100	Bank of America	64.0	0.0	100	Bank of America	64.0	0.0	100	Bank of America	64.0	0.0	100
Bank of New York	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of New York	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of New York	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of New York	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of Montreal	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of Montreal	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of Montreal	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of Montreal	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of Toronto	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of Toronto	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of Toronto	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of Toronto	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the West	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the South	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100
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Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the North	100.0	0.0	100
Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100	Bank of the East	100.0	0.0	100

ISRAEL DISCOUNT BANK

INTERNATIONAL STOCK PRICES

Stock	Price	% Change
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5

NEW YORK

Am. & P.

Stock	Price	% Change
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5

Am. & P.

Am. & P.

Stock	Price	% Change
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5

Am. & P.

Am. & P.

Stock	Price	% Change
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5

Am. & P.

Am. & P.

Stock	Price	% Change
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
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Am. & P.

Am. & P.

Stock	Price	% Change
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
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Am. & P.

Stock	Price	% Change
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
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Am. & P.

Stock	Price	% Change
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
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Am. & P.

Am. & P.

Stock	Price	% Change
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
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Am. & P.

Am. & P.

Stock	Price	% Change
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
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Am. & P.

Am. & P.

Stock	Price	% Change
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5
Am. & P.	45.0	+0.5

Comstock Trading Ltd. (Data 21-Feb-95)

Lower rates fail to boost indexes

TEL AVIV STOCK MARKET

Andre Lumbroso

Index	Value	% Change
Two-Sided Index	157.29	-0.96%
Maof Index	156.04	-1.23%
Karam Index	134.32	+0.03%

IT was an unusual trading day with something for everyone - a reduction in interest rates for those who had been demanding it; frustration for those who had been clamoring for a large decrease; rumors of speculation by Maof arbitrageurs; price declines on the share market; and a positive mood on the bond market.

The Two-Sided Index declined almost one percent; the Maof fell 1.2% and the Karam managed to post a symbolic rise of 0.03%.

Turnover was NIS 80.5 million. The 0.7% reduction in interest rates was announced at mid-morning, early enough to make itself felt on the bond and the Karam markets.

The decision made little economic sense, except as a way to stem the flood of redemptions of provident funds. In a swift move, the central bank proved several things, few of them welcome:

First, it was seen caving in to outside, mainly political pressure. Not so long ago, it was made clear that the 0.2% rise in the CPI for January should not be construed as heralding a cooling of inflationary pressures, but was due simply to seasonal factors, and as such, there was no room for lowering interest rates.

Second, it was proved again - as it was proved during the sordid affair of the on-again, off-again stock market tax - that the interests of the capital market are paramount in determining economic policy.

There is no proof, however, that the redemptions of provident funds are linked to high interest rates. One could argue that they reflect structural factors and a comprehensive policy for the capital market in general and the provident funds in particular might be in order. Where, by the way, is the Provident Funds Law? Stuck in committee in the Knesset?

Third, the oft-heard assertion that high interest rates were a major obstacle in the recovery of the stock market was proven false, as prices actually declined despite the announcement.

The argument advanced by some, that prices actually fell be-

FTSE rises 4.8 points

WORLD MARKET ROUNDUP

LONDON (Reuters) - Shares closed steady, with rising index futures and a stable Wall Street start, helping a quiet market overcome lingering political worries.

The FTSE 100 finished 4.8 points higher, at 3,023.4 points, after having started on an easier note, again depressed by fears over the stability of the Conservative government, dealers said.

ZURICH - Swiss shares ended higher in a quiet session and low volumes led up by former Roche and a higher start on Wall Street. The dollar's mild rebound also helped the shares. The broad SPI index firmed 7.11 points to 1,703.08.

TOKYO - Stocks closed firmer on waves of index-linked buying amid a lack of fresh news to inspire the market.

Trade was slack, as volume was merely inflated by a rash of cross-trades and arbitrage-linked activity. The Nikkei share average ended up 139.77 points, on turnover of an estimated 350 million shares, compared with 277 million on Monday.

HONG KONG - Stocks ended sharply higher as optimism grew about a land auction today, and fears faded about fallout from the Shougang affair.

The Hang Seng index ended 175.55 points up, at its day's high of 8,082.29, erasing Monday's 136-point loss.

SYDNEY - The Australian share market closed slightly firmer on light volume, after US financial markets were closed for the holiday on Monday.

Stock prices close mixed

WALL STREET REPORT

NEW YORK (Reuters) - Stock prices ended on a mixed note yesterday as Wall Street waited for today's remarks by Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan in an appearance before the Senate Banking Committee.

The Dow Jones industrial average closed up 10.43 points at 3,963.97 based on early and unofficial data.

The Nasdaq Index was off 2.35 points at 784.62.

In the broader market, declining issues led advances by a small margin on active trading of more than 310 million shares on the New York Stock Exchange.

CURRENCY CROSS-RATES

MARK	STERLING	YEN	SFR	FFr
MARK	2.3318/28	0.4286/90	66.01/04	0.8453/56
STERLING	1.5143/58	0.6482/86	1.2800/17	5.2786/44
YEN	118.21/26	0.5068/75	78.06/10	4.1208/63
SFR	0.2887/70	0.1225/31	18.91/96	0.2423/27
FFr				

Petah Tikva wins Toto Cup

ORI LEWIS

MACCABI Petah Tikva won the Toto Cup with an upset 2-1 victory over Maccabi Tel Aviv yesterday, crowning a remarkable run in the competition this season.

The Petah Tikvas, 12th in the National League standings, overcame the league leaders, playing over half of the match with just 10 men, thus completing the competition with eight wins - six in the preliminary round-robin group rounds and then in the semifinal knockout stage and yesterday's final.

The match was a disappointing affair, a far cry from a classic cup-tie duel and with only 2,000 spectators at Ramat Gan the vast emptiness of the National Stadium gave the players a feeling they were in a practice match.

The Tel Avivians took the field looking as if the result would be a foregone conclusion. The slow pace and inaccurate passing by both sides certainly gave the impression that neither was in a hurry to get their teeth into the match.

Tel Aviv appeared prepared to sit and wait for an opportunity to present itself, slowly applying pressure on the Petah Tikva goal. But suddenly it all went wrong when Petah Tikva's Guy Yitzhak, in a swift breakaway move with the Tel Aviv defense stranded, pounced on a loose ball and proceeded to beat the advancing Alexander Obarov in the Tel Aviv goal in the ninth minute.

Tel Aviv's first shot at goal came only in the 15th minute, but it was as lame an effort as its whole attitude appeared towards the game.

A further five minutes had passed and then Tel Aviv paid the price for its complacency once more as captain Ran Ben-Shimon struck a free kick from 20 meters out perfectly round the wall to leave Obarov with no chance.

With the first half coming to an end, Petah Tikva suffered a severe



GET STUCK IN - Petah Tikva's Sharon Tsoref slides to block the path of Tel Aviv's Nir Sivilia in yesterday's Toto Cup match.

blow when defender Oded Tzachi was shown the red card by referee Rahamim Shasho for a challenge on Nir Sivilia.

The second half began with Tel Aviv's back to the wall, although knowing that Petah Tikva was now a man short, it felt it could overcome the two-goal deficit and hopefully manage to come back. With the option of extra time and penalties available the team fancied its chances of making up the two-goal deficit.

Tel Aviv piled on the pressure, but it could still only lumber through the Petah Tikva defense and the passing continued to be inaccurate. The Petah Tikvas, for their part, closed up at the back and tried to

hold on to the two-goal cushion. Tel Aviv's consolation goal came exactly on the hour after Petah Tikva keeper Golan Malul failed to clear a header by Meni Basson from a corner. Sivilia pounced on the ball and stabbed it home from point-blank range.

Another severe tackle on Sivilia in the 75th minute saw the Tel Aviv danger man leave the field with a leg injury and the already-blunt Tel Aviv attack then lost what little cutting edge it still had.

Subsequent attempts by Avi Nimni and captain Nir Klinger failed to impress Malul and the Petah Tikva defense, which held on bravely to the end.

Ben-Shimon collected the cup

and winning team's check for NIS 160,000. Because of its unbeaten record, Petah Tikva amassed NIS 540,000 during the whole competition.

The Petah Tikva players paid tribute to their former coach, Yehoshua Feigenbaum after the match, saying he had a major part in the victory. Feigenbaum parted company with the club on Sunday after a string of disappointing results which has seen it slump close to the relegation zone. Petah Tikva still needs to name a permanent coach while Menashe Nuriel is currently filling in the post.

In the Second Division Toto Cup final played earlier, Hapoel Bat Yam crushed Hapoel Ramat Gan 5-1 to win NIS 80,000.

Graham dismissed over alleged kickbacks

LONDON (AP) - Arsenal manager George Graham was fired yesterday in connection with allegations that he received kickbacks as part of transfer deals.

Arsenal said it concluded that Graham, the target of a Premier League inquiry into alleged transfer irregularities, "did not act in the best interests of the club."

Graham, the most successful manager in the club's history, called the team's action a "kangaroo court judgment" and said he would fight to clear his name.

The club's statement, issued just hours before Arsenal's league match against Nottingham Forest at Highbury, said assistant manager Stewart Houston would take over as team boss for the game.

The move came two days before the Premier League is scheduled to announce the results of its investigation into Graham's financial dealings.

The Scottish manager's job had been in jeopardy since December when allegations surfaced that he received £285,000 as part of Danish star John Jensen's £1.1-million transfer from Brondby to the Gunners in 1992.

Graham has claimed the money was a gift from Norwegian agent Rune Hauge and said he returned the cash to Arsenal.

Arsenal chairman Peter Hill-Wood said he was left with no choice but to fire Graham after discussing the evidence with Premier League chief executive Rick Parry last week.

Graham, who could still face charges and a possible ban from the sidelines from the Football Association over the matter, reacted bitterly to his firing in a statement released through his lawyer.

"The allegations are nonsense. I deeply regret that this kangaroo court judgment should have been reached in such a hole-in-the-corner way. My record of loyalty and service demanded better treatment."

"I believe this matter should be fully investigated. What is the future for football if the standards of justice inside the game can be ignored in this way?"

Graham's dismissal ends a glittering spell at Highbury, during which he brought the club six trophies.

Minor leaguers forced to choose sides in strike

NEW YORK (AP) - As baseball negotiations prepared to resume talks yesterday in Milwaukee, managers and general managers assailed the union's decision to consider anyone playing exhibition games a strikebreaker.

"You put some 20-year-old kid from Georgia into an exhibition game and he's a scab? That's ridiculous," said Montreal manager Felipe Alou, who hasn't decided yet if he will run the team in those games.

Union head Donald Fehr said striking major leaguers will consider anyone a strikebreaker who plays at a major league site or in a game for which admission is charged.

Cincinnati Reds general manager Jim Bowden is threatening

to send minor leaguers home if they balk at playing in exhibitions.

"The question is, who are you going to make happy?" said Reds pitcher Travis Buckley, who doesn't want to be a strikebreaker. "Do you want to make your own organization happy or do you want to make the union happy?"

With some teams wondering whether they'd have enough players for split squad games, two exhibitions were canceled Monday: California's game against Colorado on March 6 and the Chicago Cubs' March 11 game against Milwaukee.

Meanwhile, negotiators in Milwaukee will try to figure out the next step when the sides meet

formally for the first time since February 7. The talks, involving small groups, were not expected to lead to major developments.

"I think it's more process-type stuff," management lawyer Chuck O'Connor said. "Where are we, what are we doing, where are we going to do."

Joining acting commissioner Bud Selig and O'Connor will be Boston Red Sox chief executive officer John Harrington, Colorado Rockies chairman Jerry McMorris and Rob Manfred, another lawyer. Fehr will be joined by Lauren Rich, the union's No. 3 official, and perhaps others.

"I think in a smaller setting maybe we can begin to accomplish some things," said Selig, the Milwaukee Brewers owner.

Magic explode 152-104 over Bucks

MILWAUKEE - Shaquille O'Neal scored 30 points and grabbed 11 rebounds as the Orlando Magic set four franchise records with a 152-104 thrashing of the Milwaukee Bucks on Monday.

The Magic scored the first eight points of the game, holding Milwaukee scoreless over the first 2:48 until Vin Baker dunked

to make it 8-2. After the Bucks narrowed the lead to 17-13, Orlando went on a 14-0 run to blow the game open.

"Milwaukee had the misfortune of catching us after an embarrassing loss at Minnesota," Orlando coach Brian Hill said. "It's scary what we can accomplish when everyone plays together."

"It's an embarrassing loss," Baker said. "It's not something we want or I like to be a part of."

Warriors 98, 76ers 85

Tim Hardaway scored 21 points and Donyell Marshall had 14 in his Golden State debut.

Marshall, acquired Saturday from Minnesota for Tom Gugliotta, had eight of his points in the second quarter when the Warriors took the lead for good.

Dana Barros scored 26 points to lead Philadelphia, and Scott Williams had a career-high 20 rebounds to go with his 17 points.

Latrell Sprewell, with 17 points, was among six Warriors in double figures as new Golden State coach Bob Lanier got his second win since taking over for Don Nelson a week ago.

Hornets 115, Bulls 104

Hersey Hawkins and Alonzo Mourning scored eight points apiece in a 38-2 third quarter run which powered host Charlotte to victory.

The Hornets outscored Chicago, 35-9, in the third quarter to turn a 60-43 halftime deficit into a 78-69 lead. Charlotte hit 10-of-16 shots while the Bulls were 4-of-14 from the field in the quarter.

Hawkins, Larry Johnson and Scott Burrell scored 23 points apiece for Charlotte. Mourning finished with 22 points and 12 rebounds.

Heat 103, Cavaliers 96

Glen Rice, the NBA's 3-point shooting champion, hit six 3-pointers and scored 36 points as visiting Miami snapped a three-game losing streak.

Alvin Gentry earned his second NBA coaching victory since replacing Kevin Loughery on February 14.

Rice, who won the 3-point shooting championship during the NBA's All-Star weekend, was 6-for-10 on 3-pointers and Miami was 9-for-15.

(Reuters, AP)

MONDAY'S RESULTS: Miami 103, Cleveland 96; Charlotte 115, Chicago 104; Orlando 152, Milwaukee 104; L.A. Lakers 105, Seattle 105; Golden State 98, Philadelphia 85.

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

Team	W	L	Pct.	GB
Utah	37	15	.712	-
San Antonio	32	18	.640	5
Houston	32	18	.640	5
Denver	21	29	.420	16
Dallas	19	29	.396	18
Minnesota	13	36	.265	23.5

Pacific Division

Team	W	L	Pct.	GB
Phoenix	40	11	.784	-
Seattle	35	16	.700	4.5
L.A. Lakers	32	17	.659	7
Sacramento	28	21	.571	11
Portland	25	23	.521	13
Golden State	16	34	.320	23.5
L.A. Clippers	9	42	.176	31

Lara signs contract with Warwickshire

LONDON (AP) - West Indian star Brian Lara signed a new three-year contract yesterday with Warwickshire starting in 1996.

Lara ended six months of talks with the English county club by flying in from the West Indies tour of New Zealand to complete the deal.

Lara, who led Warwickshire to three trophies last season, will miss the 1995 county season since he will be touring England with the West Indies this year.

When he rejoins Warwickshire in 1996, he will replace South African paceman Allan Donald as Edgbaston's overseas player.

Kansas tops collegiate basketball rankings; UConn in fourth

NEW YORK (AP) - Kansas moved to the top of the US college basketball poll for the third straight year Monday and became the fifth team to hold the No. 1 spot this season.

The Jayhawks (20-3) jumped from third to first following weekend losses by last week's top two - Connecticut and North Carolina. They were a runaway No. 1 choice, receiving 54 first-place votes and 1,637 points from a national media panel to easily outdistance the University of California at Los Angeles.

The Bruins (18-2) jumped from sixth to

second and were No. 1 on 12 ballots and had 1,546 points. They were No. 2 for a five-week stint earlier in the season before falling as low as seventh.

Kansas held the top spot for just one week last season and lost to Kansas State at home just hours after moving to No. 1. On Monday night, again just hours after going to the top, the Jayhawks were to play at Oklahoma.

In 1993, Kansas held the top spot for two weeks before losing at home to Long Beach State.

"I'd rather have it this late in the season

as opposed to earlier in the season," Kansas coach Roy Williams. "We've been No. 1 before. We lost it, but we still lived. They let me see it up in the spring. Kids' girlfriends didn't leave them when we lost the No. 1 ranking. I don't think it's a jinx."

North Carolina (20-3), which lost 73-71 at Virginia on Sunday with a chance to return to No. 1 at stake, was third, while Connecticut (20-2), which had its run at No. 1 ended after a week, was fourth.

The Huskies had a 27-game home winning streak ended by Villanova in convincing fashion Saturday, 96-73.

Six schools held the No. 1 ranking in each of the last two seasons. The season record for No. 1s is seven in 1982-83.

Massachusetts held fifth place and was followed by Kentucky, Maryland, Arkansas, Villanova and Wake Forest.

Virginia led the Second Ten and was followed by Michigan State, Arizona, Missouri, Arizona State, Mississippi State, Syracuse, Oklahoma State, Stanford and Alabama.

The final five teams in the poll were Purdue, Minnesota, Iowa State, Georgia Tech and Oklahoma.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Cantona charged with assault

Manchester United star Eric Cantona was charged with common assault yesterday for attacking a spectator at Crystal Palace last month.

Scotland Yard charged the 28-year-old French striker after several hours of questioning at a London police station.

Cantona was released on bail and ordered to appear before magistrates on March 23 to answer the charge, which constitutes the lowest form of assault in English law. It carries a maximum penalty of six months in prison and a £5,000 fine.

England likely to host Euro championships

European soccer's governing body UEFA has given a clear indication that the 1996 European championships will go ahead in England and that fences will not be needed to contain potentially violent spectators.

UEFA meets in Geneva next month to study reports of crowd violence during last Wednesday's international between England and Ireland in Dublin which was abandoned after 27 minutes because of rioting England supporters.

Nuggets name GM as president

The Denver Nuggets on Monday named general manager Bernie Bickerstaff their head coach and president of the team.

Bickerstaff will replace interim coach Gene Littles, who took over when Dan Issel stepped down as head coach.

American basketball player found dead

An American basketball player for Italian second division club Fabriano was found dead in his home Monday.

Sam Mitchell, a 24-year-old forward from Michigan, was found slumped on his couch in front of a television by coach Roberto Carmanetti. Doctors believe he died of lung failure.

SCOREBOARD

SOCCER - Yesterday's results: Arsenal 1 (Kiwona 81st minute), Nottingham Forest 0. Half-time 0-0. Attendance 35,441.

NFL - Monday's results: New Jersey 2, Washington 0; N.Y. Rangers 3, Tampa Bay 1; Montreal 3, N.Y. Islanders 2 (UT); Detroit 4, Toronto 2; Chicago 3, San Jose 2; St. Louis 4, Edmonton 0; Dallas 2, Calgary 1; Vancouver 1, Los Angeles 2.

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All workers to get 2.6% COL increment

MICHAEL YUDELMAN

THE Histadrut and employers finally signed the cost of living agreement yesterday, ensuring all workers a 2.6 percent increment in February's paycheck.

The COL agreement will apply to all workers, including half a million non-organized ones, by the power of extension orders issued yesterday by Labor and Social Affairs Minister Ora Namir.

"I waited until the official agreement was signed between the Histadrut and the employers, before issuing orders to extend it to all the workers in the country," Namir said.

The COL agreement was made possible only after the Histadrut and employers reached an understanding on another issue: the definition of industrial quiet, and the procedures to maintain it.

The employers used as leverage

the Histadrut's anxiety to sign the COL agreement before the month was over, and refused to sign the COL agreement until the other issues were settled.

The main bone of contention focused on the circumstances in which industrial quiet can be broken, and when labor disputes and strikes can be declared.

It was finally agreed that all labor disputes, sanctions and strikes will be put off until a joint committee deals with the controversy and tries to solve it.

Acting Histadrut Chairman and head of the trade union section MK Amir Peretz denied that this agreement restricts the Histadrut's action in any way, adding that "if any employer thinks that he can up and fire workers without asking anyone, let him not be surprised when he wakes up one morning to find his plant on strike."

Knesset panel wants more concessions from EU

EVELYN GORDON

ISRAEL should hold out for more concessions from the European Union on a new trade agreement, members of the Knesset Finance Committee recommended yesterday.

The committee thereby supported the position of Industry and Trade Minister Micha Harish. Although Deputy Foreign Minister Yossi Beilin, who favors signing now, before the Europeans change their mind, also addressed the committee, he did not appear to convince many MKs.

The additional changes Israel wants to make in the agreement include increasing the amount of flow-ers and citrus it is allowed to export to Europe; extending the period during which Israel is allowed to export grapes to Europe by two weeks (until the end of July); giving Israel observer status on all EU committees dealing with research and development; and allowing Israeli companies to participate in European government tenders.

The figures given the committee

emphasized the need for an improved agreement: In 1994, exports to Europe rose 16%, but imports soared by 64%. As a result, the trade deficit with Europe is expected to rise to NIS 9.5 billion this year, from NIS 7.5b. in 1994.

However, even without the additional changes, the new agreement would be a considerable improvement over the old one, the committee was told.

According to committee chairman Gedalya Gal (Labor), most of the MKs favored continuing the negotiations.

"The prime minister and the foreign minister should see [the new trade agreement] as a task of the highest importance, and should make an additional effort to improve it and to obtain more in this important field," Gal said later in a press statement.

"We must not sign until we have

achieved our goals," agreed Tichon, noting that these goals are modest compared to the associate member status Israel had once hoped to achieve as a result of the peace process.

"[The problem is that] the prime minister and the foreign minister only like to deal with foreign affairs and security," he added, saying they should be heading the negotiation team. "The politicians give in easily, because they are not experienced in economic matters."

Marriage bills pass unanimously

LIAT COLLINS

THE Knesset showed an unusual degree of harmony yesterday in two votes relating to the "before" and "after" of marriage yesterday.

Two bills — one which allows couples to sign prenuptial agreements at a notary instead of a court and the other enforcing stricter measures on husbands who refuse to grant their wives divorces — passed second and third reading unanimously. MKs from diverse parties such as Meretz and United Torah Judaism united behind the bills.

Meretz MK Dedi Zucker called the law on divorce "modernizing a law that is 1,000 years old." He said the law was aimed at solving the problem within the framework of the rabbinical courts. The law allows the courts to carry out strict sanctions against a husband who refuses to give his wife a divorce, including preventing him from leaving the country, taking out a passport, acquiring or renewing a driving license or serving in a public position.

UTJ MK Avraham Ravitz voiced reservations about the first bill, but not on religious grounds. "We are concerned that one side of a couple signing a prenuptial agreement might have pressure put on them by the other," he said. Ravitz added that he was particularly concerned that a woman who wanted to marry might be forced into agreeing to sign away her possessions by her fiancé who would make it a condition for the wedding. He dropped the reservation before the vote.

Flyover accord reached with Jordan

Jerusalem Post Staff

AIRCRAFT belonging to Royal Jordanian Airlines will be able to cross Israeli airspace as of March 10, Transport Minister Yisrael Kassar announced yesterday, adding that an air agreement with Jordan would be signed within the next few weeks.

The flyover agreement was reached during talks in Eilat yesterday between the heads of both countries' civilian aviation administrations and representatives from both air forces.

"Our allowing Jordanian flights to cross our airspace is a step that builds peace," Kassar said. "Full protection was given to the interests of our air force."

The permit to cross Israeli airspace will be re-evaluated by the two sides in May, when changes will be made if necessary.

Civil Aviation Administration head Menahem Sharon said that the Jordanians would be flying at different altitudes at different times. At night and on weekends, they will be allowed to fly at 11,000 feet to 21,000 feet; in the afternoon between 11,000 feet to 17,000 feet; and in the morning at between 11,000 feet to 12,000 feet.

Transport Ministry spokesman Eli Dahan noted that the flyover agreement applied only to Jordan's national airlines. Other airlines wishing to cross Israeli airspace from the east would have to apply for a permit from the CAA.

Winning cards & numbers

In yesterday's Mifal Hapais daily Chance card draw, the lucky cards were the 10 of spades, nine of hearts, seven of diamonds, and seven of clubs.

In the Lotto drawing, the winning numbers were 1, 3, 4, 15, 22, 46. The supplemental number was 27.



Absorption Minister Yair Tzaban helps a children's choir sing about peace during a visit yesterday to Rehovot's Yavneel school. (Yitzhak Elhanan/Scoop 89)

House panel explodes over pension rights for homosexuals

LIAT COLLINS

SEX, animals and homosexuals. That was the explosive combination unexpectedly raised by a Justice Ministry expert on Hebrew Law, and it created an uproar in an otherwise routine Knesset committee meeting yesterday.

Addressing a Labor and Social Affairs Committee meeting on pension rights for same-sex partners, Prof. Nahum Rackover said the High Court ruling that an airline steward was entitled to receive free trips for his male partner meant that eventually someone who had sex with their pet could also demand legal rights for the animal.

"Sexual relations between people of the same sex are defined in the Bible as an 'abomination'. For generations it was considered a deviation, and only recently has it become a 'tendency,'" Rackover said. "Their ex-

istence does not justify them. Sexual relations between man and beast is also something that exists. We must ignore the sexual tendencies between the couple of the same sex as we do between man and animal."

Committee chairman Yossi Katz condemned the comparison as "invalid and contemptible." Labor MK Yael Dayan was more vocal in her opposition. "Shame on you! How dare you!" she yelled at him.

Later she said that "Rackover desecrated the same Jewish democratic values he tried to protect, his position and his academic qualification."

Rackover justified the comparison saying he had been brought to the Knesset to give his legal opinion on where the ruling would lead and he had stated it.

The discussion will be continued next week.

Cousins held in theft of \$300m. manuscripts from St. Petersburg museum

RAINE MARCUS

TWO cousins suspected of planning the theft of manuscripts valued at \$300 million from the National Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia, were remanded yesterday for six days by the Petah Tikva Magistrate's Court.

Yitzhak Zrug, 53, of Kiryat Ono, and his cousin, also Yitzhak Zrug, 49, of Givatayim were arrested by the National Crimes Squad, which had been searching for them for some time. Police said they hid for a week in an Eilat hotel, where they coordinated their versions of events in case of arrest.

Information about the museum's security precautions were allegedly given to the Zrugs by Victor Levday, a former curator at the museum who was arrested three weeks ago and released on bail. Levday told police the information he had given the Zrugs had enabled them to plan

several robberies. Police admitted they had been confused at first by Levday's information, since the cousins have the same name.

Police said that the elder Zrug was allegedly involved in actually stealing the manuscripts. He was abroad at the time of the robbery and had been in regular contact with other suspects, here and in Russia.

The younger Zrug allegedly organized the robbery but was not in Russia when it was committed, police said. His lawyer, Ze'ev Gordon, said that since other major suspects in the case were released on bail, there was no reason to keep his client in custody.

"Other suspects denied all allegations, except Prof. Levday and his wife, who admitted their part in the case, and they are all out on bail, free, at home," said Gordon.

Serge Klarsfeld accuses L'Oreal principal of writing Nazi propaganda

MARILYN HENRY

NEW YORK

ONE of the principals of the L'Oreal cosmetics empire was part of the Nazi propaganda machine in France, using a newspaper column to attack Jews and anti-fascist groups, according to Nazi-hunter Serge Klarsfeld.

At a news conference in New York yesterday, Klarsfeld said the executive, Andre Bettencourt, should be denied entry to the U.S. Unlike the police who may have had no choice in rounding up Jews, Klarsfeld said, "nobody gave Andre Bettencourt orders to write articles that were the basis for anti-Jewish action in France."

In a special Easter 1941 edition of the newspaper *La Terre Francaise*, Bettencourt is reported to have written: "Jews, hypocritical pharisees... do not carry in themselves the possibility of redemption. They will be cursed by all."

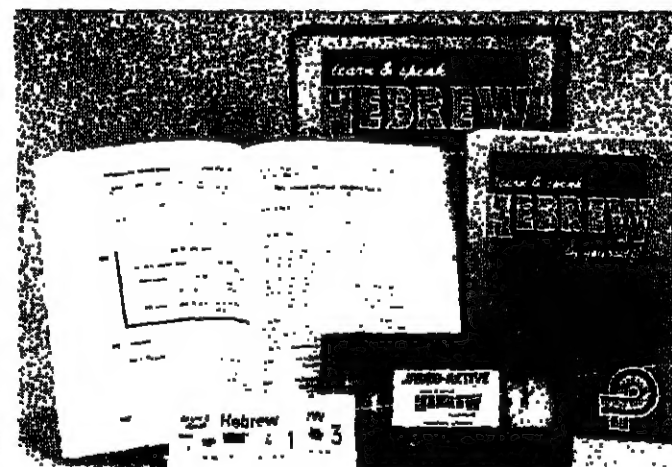
Klarsfeld said the paper, for which Bettencourt wrote 64 articles between 1940 and 1942, was controlled by the German propaganda department.

Bettencourt has been quoted as saying that as the war was drawing to a close, he joined the Resistance.

That statement was disputed by Jean Frydman, a French-Israeli businessman who appeared with Klarsfeld in New York and who was active in the French Resistance.

Bettencourt, 75, resigned last December as vice chairman of L'Oreal after he was questioned by US Representative Elliot Engel about his Nazi affiliations. However, Bettencourt, whose wife is the daughter of L'Oreal founder Eugene Schueller, is the controlling shareholder of the company that owns L'Oreal.

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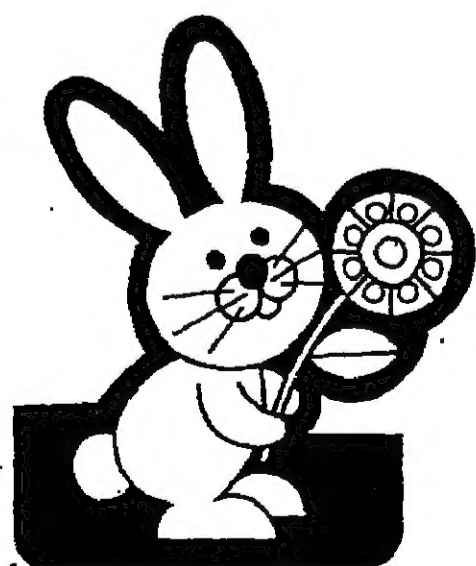
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